THE CHILLING ARCHIVES OF HORROR COMICS!™

HAUNTED HORROR™

YOE® COMICS

THE HOWLER

SPECIAL HORROR HOST GUEST!

EERIE PUBLICATIONS TRIBUTE

#22

DON HECK

MIKE "THE HOWLER" HOWLETT

Howler portrait by Putrid putridgore.com

I ADMIT IT... WHEN I WAS FIRST ASKED TO 'GUEST-EDIT' AN ISSUE OF ***HAUNTED HORROR***, I WAS INTIMIDATED. THE BANG-UP JOB DONE BY ***KARSWELL***, ***FORELOCK***, AND ***MADAME CLIZIA*** ISSUE AFTER ISSUE HAS SET THE BAR VERY HIGH. BUT I THOUGHT ABOUT IT AND DECIDED THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD CHANCE TO GET OUT FROM UNDER THE SHADOW OF ***EERIE PUBLICATIONS***, TO PROVE THAT I'M NOT JUST A ONE-TRICK PONY.

THAT SAID, THE STORIES I PRESENT TO YOU HERE ARE ALL ***PRE-CODE TERROR TALES*** THAT WERE FILCHED BY THE ***EERIE PUBS*** AND REDRAWN FOR THEIR HORROR RAGS TWO DECADES LATER. FURTHERMORE, THOSE VERY REDRAWS WERE COLLECTED FOR MY ***IDW/YOE BOOKS*** COLLECTION ***THE WORST OF EERIE PUBLICATIONS***. NOW IS YOUR CHANCE TO COMPARE THE ORIGINAL 1950s ARTWORK TO THE REDRAWS! WHICH VERSION DO YOU LIKE BETTER? I MIGHT BE A ONE-TRICK PONY, BUT I KNOW A ***GOOD HORROR STORY*** WHEN I SEE IT!

Join the hordes at **Horror Comics: 1950s and Beyond!**

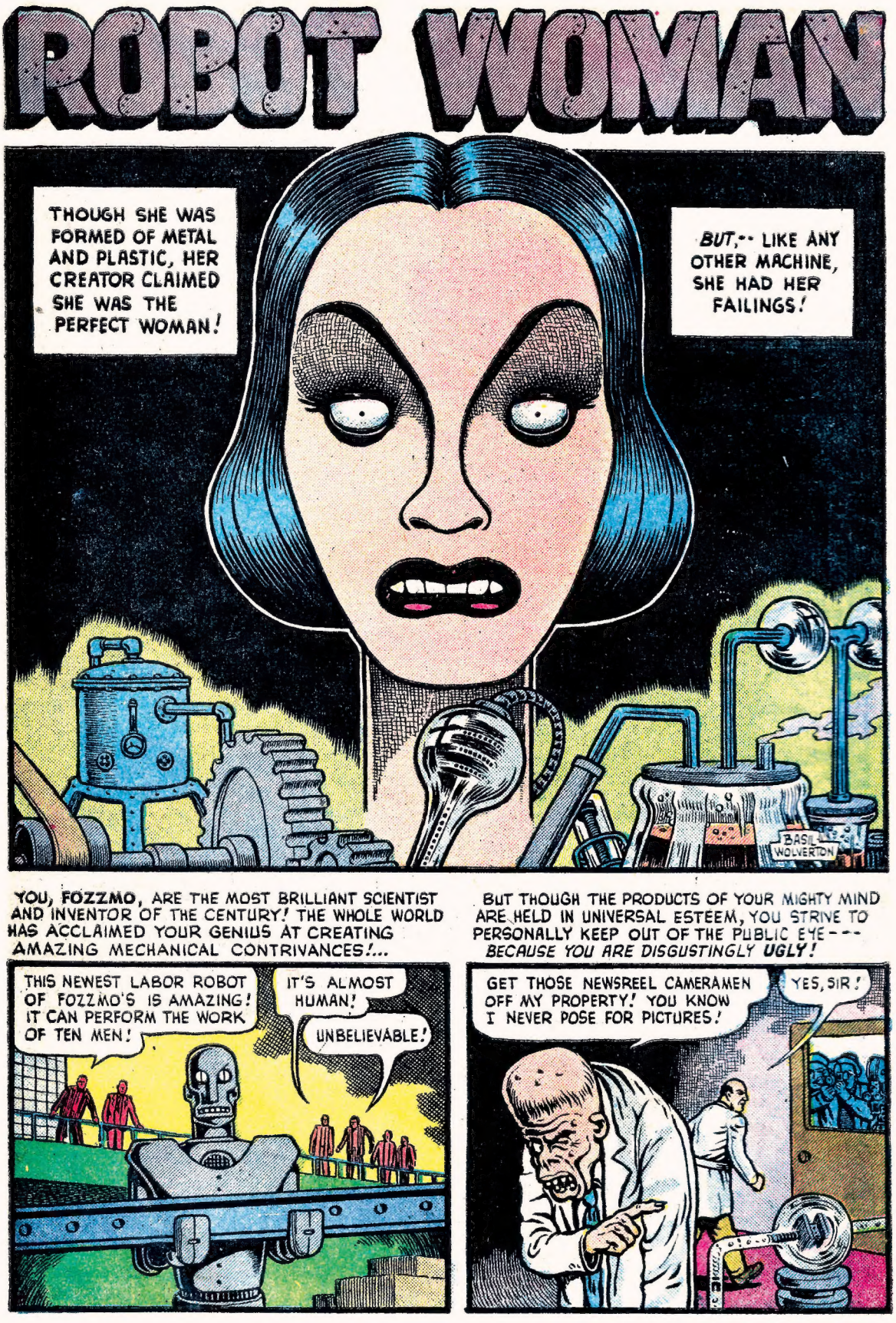
If you collect horror comics and other Golden Age fare, we're always looking for scans for use in our books and comics. Please contact Craig Yoe through Facebook.

Editors: Steve Banes, Clizia Gussoni, and Craig Yoe.
Guest Editor: Mike Howlett.
Contributing Editors: Tillmann Courth, and Toxic Tommy O'Brien.

Many thanks to: Giovanna Anzaldi, and Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr. Haunted Horror logo by Art Fuentes.

On the cover, *Weird Terror* #3, January 1953. Art: Don Heck. Comic Media.

Haunted Horror #22, June 2016. FIRST PRINTING. © 2016 Gussoni-Yoe Studio, Inc. All Rights Reserved, including the digital remastering of the material. Yoe Books is a trademark of Gussoni-Yoe Studio, Inc. Yoe is a registered trademark of Gussoni-Yoe Studio, Inc. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 2765 Truxtun Road, San Diego, CA 92106. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Printed in Korea.


ROBOT WOMAN
THOUGH SHE WAS FORMED OF METAL AND PLASTIC, HER CREATOR CLAIMED SHE WAS THE PERFECT WOMAN!
BUT,·· LIKE ANY OTHER MACHINE, SHE HAD HER FAILINGS!
BASIL WOLVERTON
YOU, FOZZMO, ARE THE MOST BRILLIANT SCIENTIST AND INVENTOR OF THE CENTURY! THE WHOLE WORLD HAS ACCLAIMED YOUR GENIUS AT CREATING AMAZING MECHANICAL CONTRIVANCES!...
BUT THOUGH THE PRODUCTS OF YOUR MIGHTY MIND ARE HELD IN UNIVERSAL ESTEEM, YOU STRIVE TO PERSONALLY KEEP OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE--- BECAUSE YOU ARE DISGUSTINGLY UGLY!
THIS NEWEST LABOR ROBOT OF FOZZMO'S IS AMAZING! IT CAN PERFORM THE WORK OF TEN MEN!
IT'S ALMOST HUMAN!
UNBELIEVABLE!
GET THOSE NEWSREEL CAMERAMEN OFF MY PROPERTY! YOU KNOW I NEVER POSE FOR PICTURES!
YES, SIR!

Weird Mysteries #2, December 1952. Art: Basil Wolverton. Publisher: Stanley Morse.

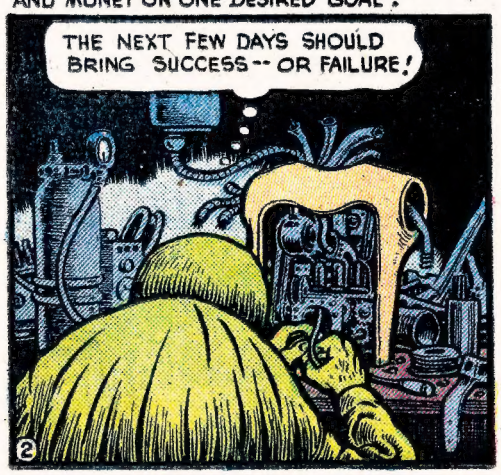
YES;--YOU'VE SEEN PEOPLE SHUDDER AT SIGHT OF YOUR DISTORTED FACE!
LOOK! THERE GOES THE FAMOUS FOZZMO!
YOU-YOU MEAN THAT THING IS THE BRILLIANT INVENTOR?

WITHOUT A MATE, YOUR LIFE IS EMPTY---
I'D TRADE MY ABILITY FOR A WOMAN WHO COULD LOOK AT ME WITHOUT DISGUST!

SOMEWHERE THERE MUST BE ONE WHO COULD CARE FOR ME!

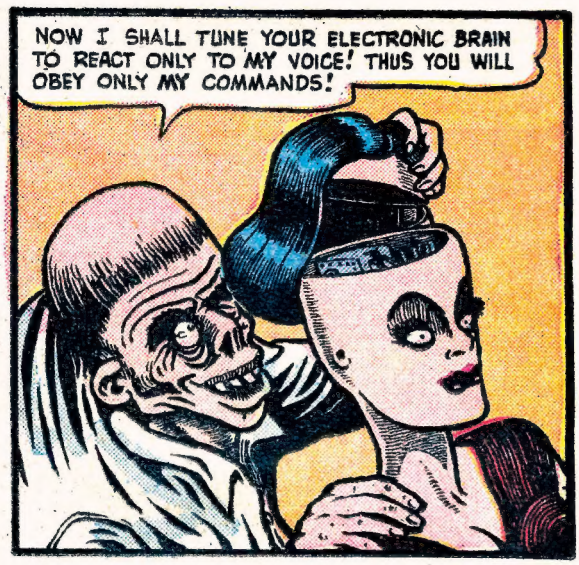
NO! IT'S HOPELESS! I'M DOOMED TO CONTINUE LIKE THIS,--RESPECTED FOR MY SCIENTIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENT,-- BUT LOATHED BECAUSE OF MY APPEARANCE!

IN THE MOMENT OF DEEPEST DEJECTION, AN IDEA IS BORN!..
WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT BEFORE? EVEN IF I BECOME A PAUPER IN THE PROCESS-- I'LL DO IT!

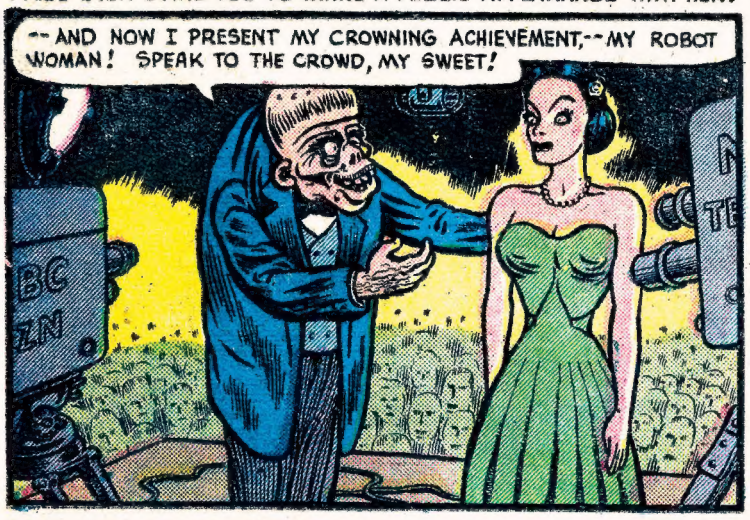

WHILE WEEKS SPEED BY, YOU THROW YOURSELF COMPLETELY INTO THE TASK, CONCENTRATING YOUR ENERGIES, FACULTIES AND MONEY ON ONE DESIRED GOAL!
THE NEXT FEW DAYS SHOULD BRING SUCCESS-- OR FAILURE!

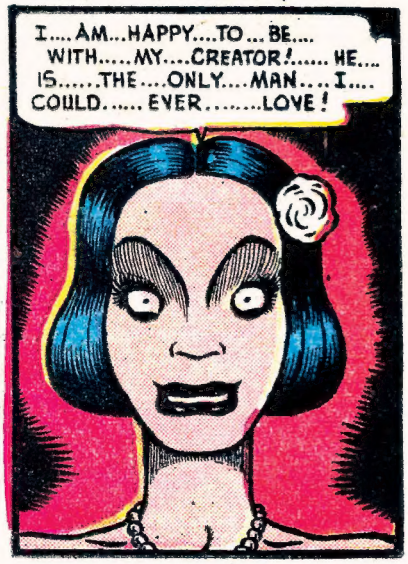
--- AND THEN!--
I'VE DONE IT! I'VE CREATED A WOMAN OF MY OWN!

YOU, MY DEAR, ARE MY MASTERPIECE! YOU ARE ONLY METAL AND PLASTIC,--BUT YOUR SYNTHETIC FLESH ALONE COST ME A FORTUNE -- AND YOU WILL BE WORTH IT!



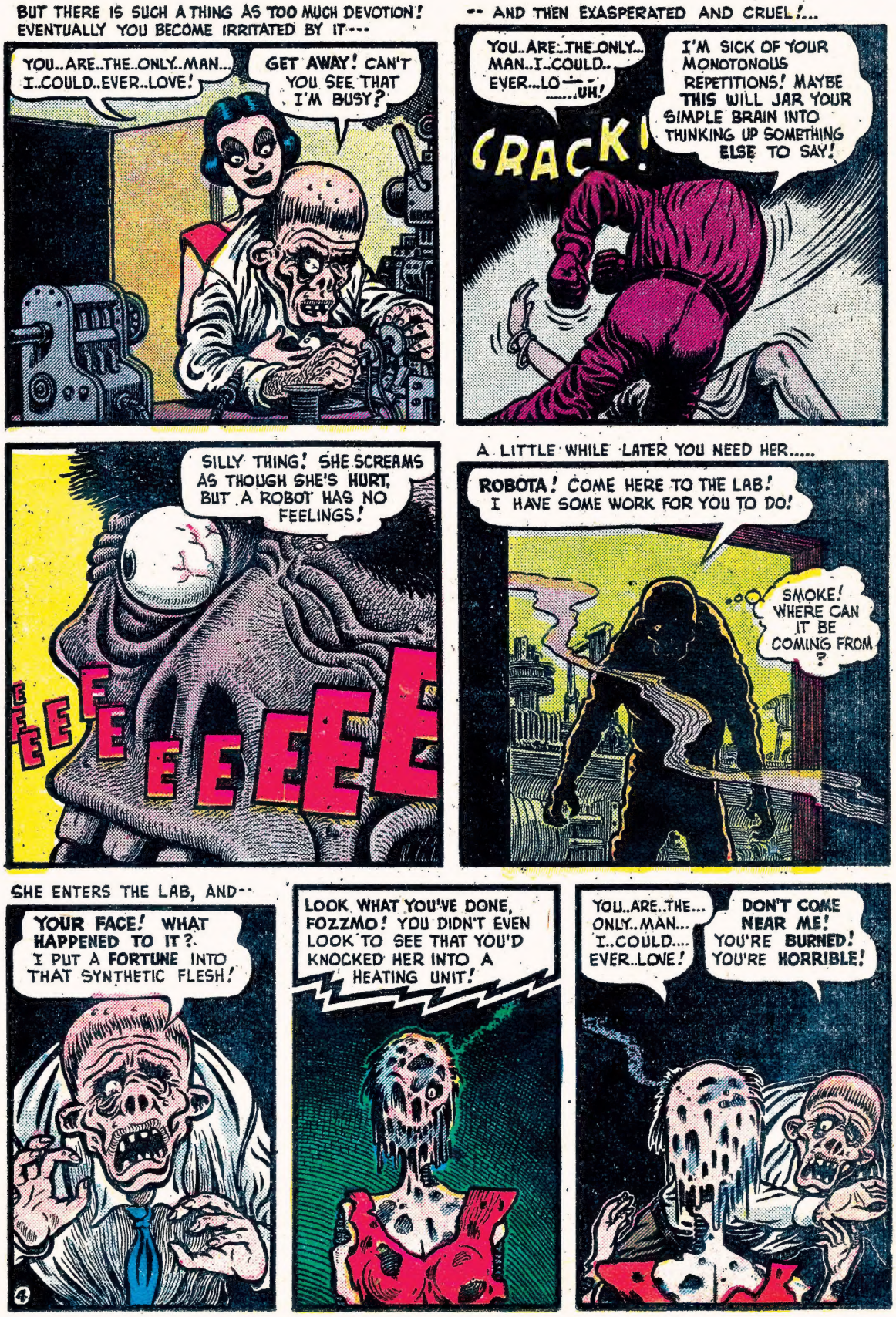
SO, FOZZMO; YOU PUT THE FINAL TOUCH TO YOUR ROBOT WOMAN! PRIDE EVEN STIRS YOU TO MAKE A PUBLIC APPEARANCE WITH HER!





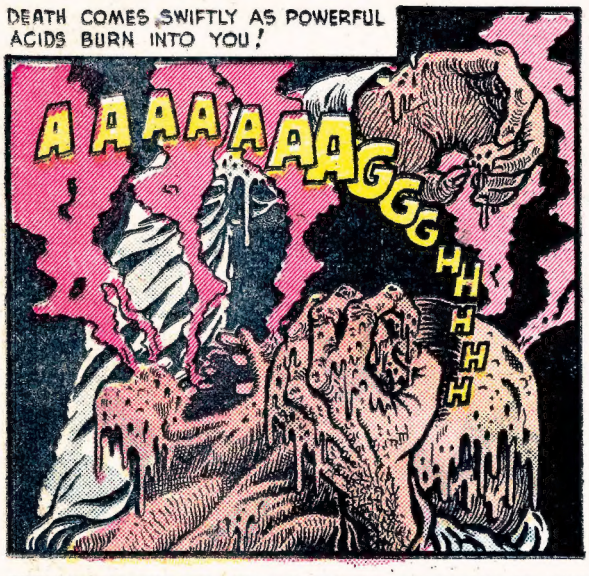
YOU SEE? HERE IS A WOMAN WHO WILL NEVER GROW OLD, WHO WILL NEVER FAIL TO OBEY AND WHO WILL NEVER LOVE ANY ONE BUT ME! SHE IS THE PERFECT WOMAN!
3

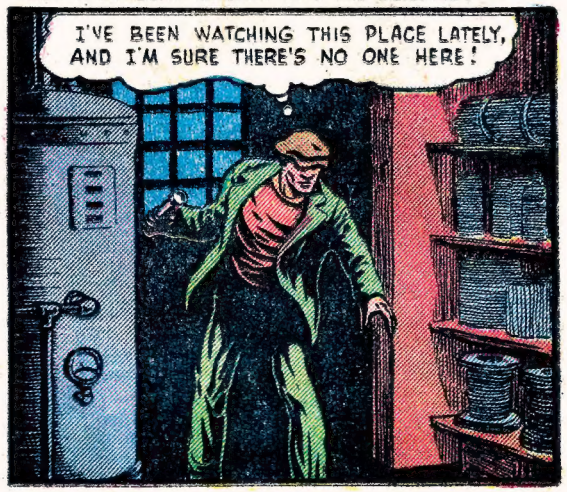
IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, YOU ENJOY THE CONSTANT DEVOTION OF YOUR CREATION...


BUT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS TOO MUCH DEVOTION! EVENTUALLY YOU BECOME IRRITATED BY IT---
YOU..ARE..THE..ONLY..MAN... I..COULD..EVER..LOVE!
GET AWAY! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I'M BUSY?
-- AND THEN EXASPERATED AND CRUEL!...
YOU..ARE..THE..ONLY.. MAN..I..COULD.. EVER...LO——..... ..UH!
CRACK!
I'M SICK OF YOUR MONOTONOUS REPETITIONS! MAYBE THIS WILL JAR YOUR SIMPLE BRAIN INTO THINKING UP SOMETHING ELSE TO SAY!
SILLY THING! SHE SCREAMS AS THOUGH SHE'S HURT, BUT A ROBOT HAS NO FEELINGS!
EEEEEEEEEEE
A LITTLE WHILE LATER YOU NEED HER.....
ROBOTA! COME HERE TO THE LAB! I HAVE SOME WORK FOR YOU TO DO!
SMOKE! WHERE CAN IT BE COMING FROM?
SHE ENTERS THE LAB, AND--
YOUR FACE! WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?. I PUT A FORTUNE INTO THAT SYNTHETIC FLESH!
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE, FOZZMO! YOU DIDN'T EVEN LOOK TO SEE THAT YOU'D KNOCKED HER INTO A HEATING UNIT!
YOU..ARE..THE... ONLY..MAN... I..COULD.... EVER..LOVE!
DON'T COME NEAR ME! YOU'RE BURNED! YOU'RE HORRIBLE!
4

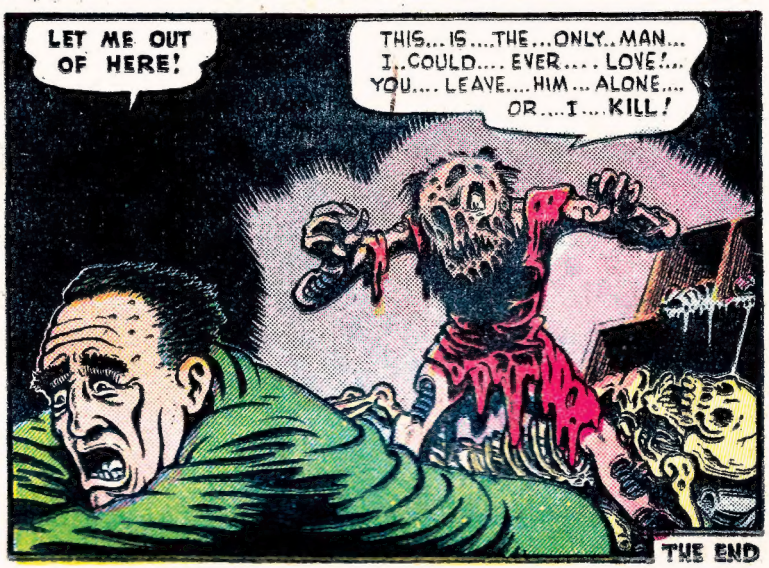
WHY...DO...YOU...NOT...PUT... YOUR... ARMS... AROUND... ME... WHEN... YOU...CALL... ME..... AS...YOU..USED... TO...DO?
GET AWAY! I CAN'T STAND YOU!

YOU STAGGER BACK, AND CRASH INTO SOME BOTTLES!..
NITRIC
ACIDS
CRASH!


DEATH COMES SWIFTLY AS POWERFUL ACIDS BURN INTO YOU!
AAAAAAAGGGHHHHHH


BECAUSE OF YOUR DESIRE FOR SECLUSION, DAYS PASS BEFORE ANY ONE SUSPECTS SOMETHING IS WRONG! THEN A BURGLAR BREAKS INTO THE BUILDING!
I'VE BEEN WATCHING THIS PLACE LATELY, AND I'M SURE THERE'S NO ONE HERE!

EEEEEEEEEK!
5


LET ME OUT OF HERE!
THIS... IS....THE...ONLY..MAN... I..COULD.... EVER.... LOVE!... YOU.... LEAVE....HIM... ALONE.... OR....I... KILL!
THE END

HEH, HEH, HEH... GREETINGS, GHOULS! WELCOME TO THE COFFIN OF TERROR! WE'VE GOT A JUICY MORSEL TO APPEASE YOUR GORY APPETITES! THIS SICKENING SAGA WILL DELIGHT THE HUNGRIEST OF HORROR DEVOTEES! COME, PULL UP YOUR HIGHCHAIRS, ATTACH YOUR RANCID BIBS AND PREPARE TO SINK YOUR FANGS INTO SOME...
CHEF'S DELIGHT
A MASTERPIECE, GASTON! SHEER ARTISTRY!
YOU'RE SO RIGHT, ALPHONSE! AND ONCE WE DIP THESE FOOLS IN OUR SPECIAL SHRINKING FORMULA, WE'LL HAVE TWO DOLLS TO PUT ON TOP OF THE CAKE AS BRIDE AND GROOM! HAHAHAHAHA!
OUR SCENE OPENS IN THE CAFE GOURMET, THE MOST EXPENSIVE AND EXCLUSIVE RESTAURANT IN THE SWANK MOULIN ROUGE DISTRICT OF PARIS. HERE, AMID PLUSH SURROUNDINGS, WEALTHY PATRONS DINE ON THE SUPERB CUISINE OF FRANCOIS NICOLE, CHEF SUPREME OF THE CAFE...
EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT, HENRI! THE STUFFED CALF'S HEART HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER! SEND OUR COMPLIMENTS TO FRANCOIS!
OUI, MONSIEUR! STUFFED HEART IS FRANCOIS' SPECIALTY!
YES, PEOPLE COME FROM MILES AROUND TO FEAST ON THE GOURMET'S WORLD-REKNOWN DISH: STUFFED CALF'S HEART! THE KITCHEN IS FRANCOIS NICOLE'S KINGDOM AND IN IT HE REIGNS AS GOD!
FOOLS! IDIOTS! YOU'VE RUINED THE PATÉ!
HE IS A SLAVE-DRIVER!
IGNORE HIM! HE YELLS TO ENJOY THE SOUND OF HIS OWN VOICE!

Mysterious Adventures #20, June 1954. Pencils attributed to Dick Beck, inks attributed to Bill Savage. Publisher: Story Comics.

THE ASSISTANT COOKS AREN'T ALONE IN THEIR DISLIKE OF FRANCOIS. THE WAITERS, THE CASHIERS, EVEN THE BOSSES OF THE **CAFE GOURMET** HATE FRANCOIS' GUTS!

ANOTHER RAISE! MAIS NON! **NON!** WE INCREASED YOUR SALARY ONLY LAST MONTH!

TOO BAD, MESSIEURS! THE **CAFE EPICURE** HAS OFFERED ME MORE MONEY! I SHALL **LEAVE** AT THE END OF THE WEEK!

BUT, OF COURSE, THE **GOURMET** CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE FRANCOIS! WITHOUT HIS KITCHEN MAGIC, BUSINESS WOULD FALL OFF TO NOTHING... AND SO, AS USUAL, THEY GIVE IN TO HIS EXORBITANT DEMANDS...

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, **YOU WIN!** WE'LL MEET THE **EPICURE'S** PRICE!

HAHA! YOU ARE TOO TOO KIND, MESSIEURS!

FRANCOIS IS THE HIGHEST PAID CHEF IN ALL OF PARIS. HE DRESSES EXPENSIVELY...

BON SOIR, MY POOR **PIGS!** THAT IS ALL YOU ARE FIT FOR... **WASHING DISHES...**

AND HE DRIVES A HIGH-POWERED CUSTOM-BUILT SPORT CAR...

DA DE DUM, DA DE DUM...

CAFE

UPON LEAVING THE RESTAURANT, FRANCOIS GUIDES THE CAR TO A LARGE APARTMENT BUILDING ALONG THE SWANK RUE DE LA PAIX. THE ELEVATOR TAKES HIM TO THE TOP FLOOR WHERE, USING HIS KEY, HE ENTERS AN ELEGANTLY FURNISHED LIVING ROOM. BUT THE ROOM IS NOT EMPTY. SOMEONE AWAITS FRANCOIS' ARRIVAL...

DARLING, DARLING!

BABETTE, MY SWEET...

A TOUCHING LITTLE SCENE, EH? THE FAITHFUL WIFE GREETING HER... BUT WAIT A MINUTE! WHO SAID SHE WAS HIS WIFE? NO, KIDDIES, LUSCIOUS BABETTE IS **NOT** FRANCOIS' WIFE! INSTEAD, SHE IS HIS TOY... A GORGEOUS DOLL!

FRANCOIS, **DARLING,** I SAW THE **SWEETEST FUR PIECE** TODAY! A **STOLE** WITH SPECIAL...

SAY NO MORE, ANGEL! IT'S **YOURS!** I'LL WRITE OUT A **CHECK** BEFORE I LEAVE!

YES, BABETTE IS AN EXPENSIVE TOY BUT FRANCOIS IS WILD ABOUT HER AND NO PRICE IS TOO HIGH! HE PAYS THE RENTAL ON HER APARTMENT, BUYS HER CLOTHES AND EVERY WEEK GIVES HER AN "ALLOWANCE!" BUT NEVER FEAR, KIDDIES, FRANCOIS FEELS HIS BELOVED IS WORTH EVERY FRANC...

WHEN FRANCOIS LEAVES BABETTE, DAWN IS JUST BREAKING OVER THE PARISIAN SKY. ONCE AGAIN HE ENTERS THE SLEEK BLACK CAR AND SETTLES BEHIND THE WHEEL... BUT THIS TIME HE DRIVES TO A SLUM SECTOR OF TOWN... WHERE ANOTHER WOMAN AWAITS HIM...

WHAT'S THE **EXCUSE** TONIGHT? **WHERE** HAVE YOU BEEN?

DON'T START THAT **AGAIN**, MARIE! IT'S **LATE** AND I'M TIRED!

YES, AS YOU CAN SEE, FRANCOIS **DOES** HAVE A WIFE! MARIE AND FRANCOIS HAVE BEEN MARRIED TEN YEARS. THEY HAVE TWO CHILDREN... BUT NEITHER HIS WIFE OR CHILDREN SEE MUCH OF THE ERRING HEAD-OF-THE-HOUSE...

NOW QUIET, CHILDREN! YOUR FATHER'S SLEEPING!

BUT, MAMA, HE **ALWAYS** SLEEPS! HE **NEVER** TALKS OR PLAYS WITH US!

AND, DESPITE HIS LARGE INCOME, FRANCOIS PROVIDES LITTLE BETTER THAN A STARVATION INCOME TO HIS FAMILY...

BUT, FRANCOIS, YOU'VE **GOT** TO GIVE ME MORE MONEY! THE CHILDREN NEED WINTER COATS AND...

THEY'LL HAVE TO DO **WITHOUT** THEM! I HAVE **NO** MONEY TO GIVE YOU!

THE CHEF DESPISES HIS RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD MARIE AND THE CHILDREN. HE HOPES TO DRIVE HIS WIFE TO SEEK A DIVORCE AND THUS GAIN HIS FREEDOM!

YOU **BEAST!** HAVE YOU NO **HEART?** THEY'RE YOUR **CHILDREN!** YOUR OWN **FLESH** AND **BLOOD! MON DIEU,** DO YOU WISH THEM TO **STARVE!**

FRANKLY, MARIE, I DON'T **CARE** WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM!

FRANCOIS' WORDS DRIVE MARIE INTO A FRENZY OF DESPAIR AND SHE SLAPS HIM... BUT HER HUSBAND IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR HER...

YOU FILTHY PIG! HOW DARE YOU SLAP ME?

SLAP!

AIEEEE!

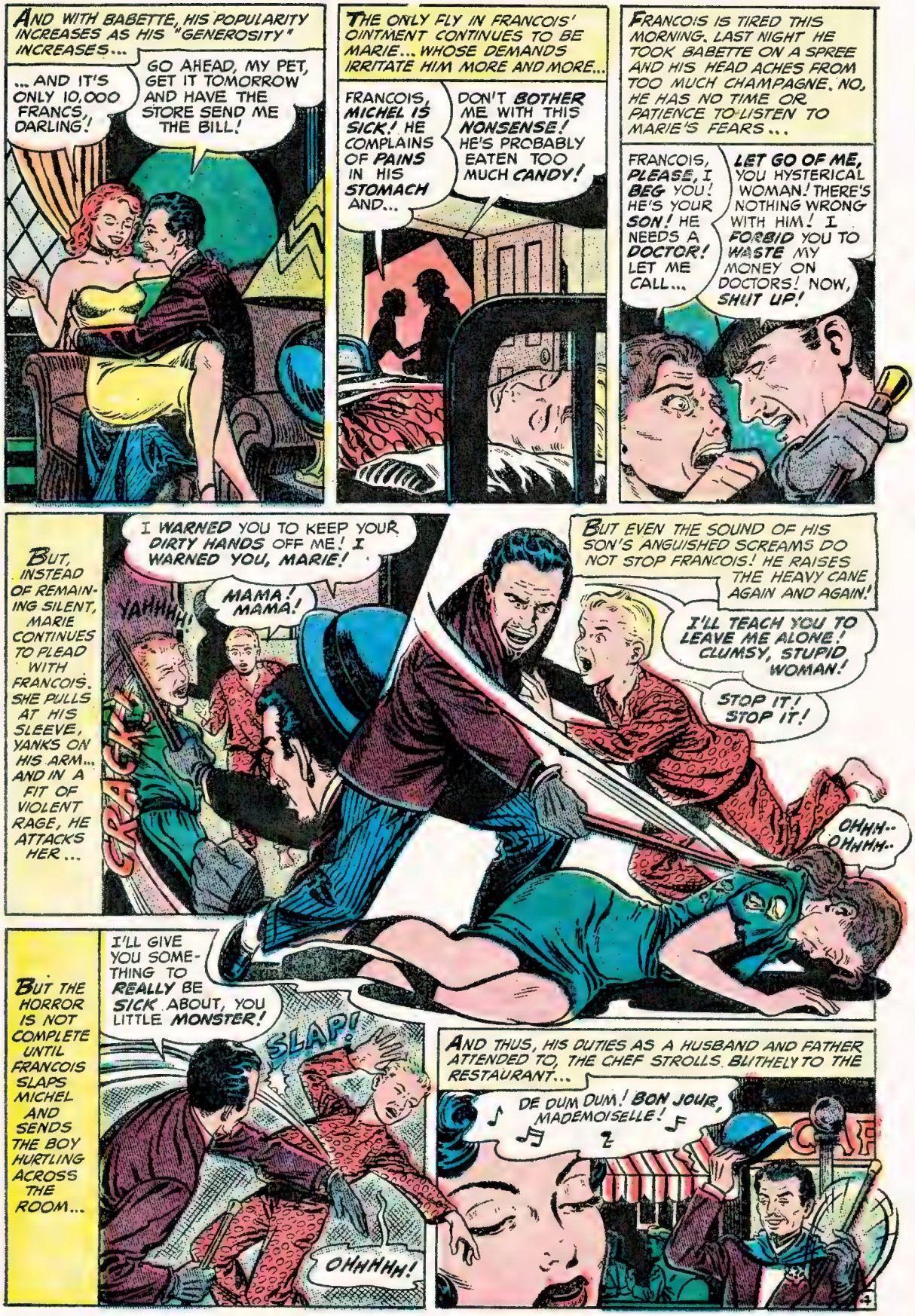
I (SOB) I **HATE** YOU! **HATE YOU!**

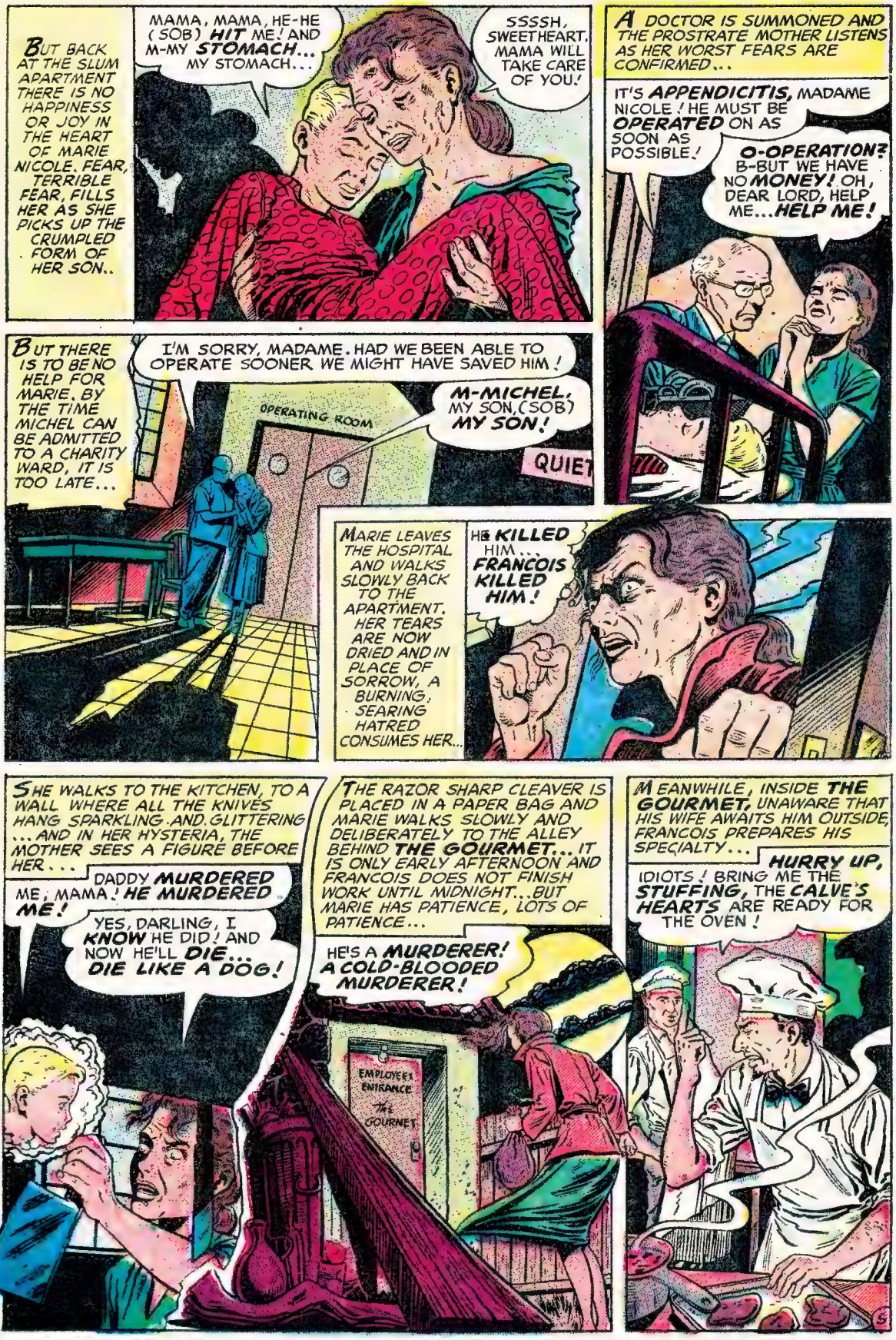
THAT'S **FINE** WITH ME... BUT I **WARN** YOU, IF YOU EVER LAY A HAND ON ME AGAIN, YOU'LL GET THE **BEATING** OF YOUR LIFE!

NOT A VERY PRETTY PICTURE, IS IT, KIDDIES? BUT NEVER FEAR, FRANCOIS WILL PAY FOR HIS SINS IN THE END. FOR A MONTH, HOWEVER, HE CONTINUES TO RIDE HIGH! AT THE RESTAURANT, HIS CULINARY ARTISTRY IS AS DELECTABLE AS EVER...

THIS IS FOR MONSIEUR BELDERE! DON'T LET IT COOL, FOOL!

OUI, FRANCOIS! ONE **STUFFED CALF'S HEART** FOR THE MAYOR!


AND WITH BABETTE, HIS POPULARITY INCREASES AS HIS "GENEROSITY" INCREASES...
... AND IT'S ONLY 10,000 FRANCS, DARLING!
GO AHEAD, MY PET, GET IT TOMORROW AND HAVE THE STORE SEND ME THE BILL!
THE ONLY FLY IN FRANCOIS' OINTMENT CONTINUES TO BE MARIE... WHOSE DEMANDS IRRITATE HIM MORE AND MORE...
FRANCOIS, MICHEL IS SICK! HE COMPLAINS OF PAINS IN HIS STOMACH AND...
DON'T BOTHER ME WITH THIS NONSENSE! HE'S PROBABLY EATEN TOO MUCH CANDY!
FRANCOIS IS TIRED THIS MORNING. LAST NIGHT HE TOOK BABETTE ON A SPREE AND HIS HEAD ACHES FROM TOO MUCH CHAMPAGNE. NO, HE HAS NO TIME OR PATIENCE TO LISTEN TO MARIE'S FEARS...
FRANCOIS, PLEASE, I BEG YOU! HE'S YOUR SON! HE NEEDS A DOCTOR! LET ME CALL...
LET GO OF ME, YOU HYSTERICAL WOMAN! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HIM! I FORBID YOU TO WASTE MY MONEY ON DOCTORS! NOW, SHUT UP!
BUT, INSTEAD OF REMAINING SILENT, MARIE CONTINUES TO PLEAD WITH FRANCOIS. SHE PULLS AT HIS SLEEVE, YANKS ON HIS ARM... AND IN A FIT OF VIOLENT RAGE, HE ATTACKS HER...
I WARNED YOU TO KEEP YOUR DIRTY HANDS OFF ME! I WARNED YOU, MARIE!
YAHHHH!
MAMA! MAMA!
CRACK!
BUT EVEN THE SOUND OF HIS SON'S ANGUISHED SCREAMS DO NOT STOP FRANCOIS! HE RAISES THE HEAVY CANE AGAIN AND AGAIN!
I'LL TEACH YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE! CLUMSY, STUPID WOMAN!
STOP IT! STOP IT!
OHHH.. OHHHH..
BUT THE HORROR IS NOT COMPLETE UNTIL FRANCOIS SLAPS MICHEL AND SENDS THE BOY HURTLING ACROSS THE ROOM...
I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO REALLY BE SICK ABOUT, YOU LITTLE MONSTER!
SLAP!
OHHHHH!
AND THUS, HIS DUTIES AS A HUSBAND AND FATHER ATTENDED TO, THE CHEF STROLLS BLITHELY TO THE RESTAURANT...
DE DUM DUM! BON JOUR, MADEMOISELLE!
CAFE
4


BUT BACK AT THE SLUM APARTMENT THERE IS NO HAPPINESS OR JOY IN THE HEART OF MARIE NICOLE. FEAR, TERRIBLE FEAR, FILLS HER AS SHE PICKS UP THE CRUMPLED FORM OF HER SON..
MAMA, MAMA, HE-HE (SOB) HIT ME! AND M-MY STOMACH... MY STOMACH...
SSSSH, SWEETHEART, MAMA WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU!
A DOCTOR IS SUMMONED AND THE PROSTRATE MOTHER LISTENS AS HER WORST FEARS ARE CONFIRMED...
IT'S APPENDICITIS, MADAME NICOLE! HE MUST BE OPERATED ON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!
O-OPERATION? B-BUT WE HAVE NO MONEY! OH, DEAR LORD, HELP ME... HELP ME!
BUT THERE IS TO BE NO HELP FOR MARIE. BY THE TIME MICHEL CAN BE ADMITTED TO A CHARITY WARD, IT IS TOO LATE...
I'M SORRY, MADAME. HAD WE BEEN ABLE TO OPERATE SOONER WE MIGHT HAVE SAVED HIM!
OPERATING ROOM
M-MICHEL, MY SON, (SOB) MY SON!
QUIET
MARIE LEAVES THE HOSPITAL AND WALKS SLOWLY BACK TO THE APARTMENT. HER TEARS ARE NOW DRIED AND IN PLACE OF SORROW, A BURNING, SEARING HATRED CONSUMES HER...
HE KILLED HIM... FRANCOIS KILLED HIM!
SHE WALKS TO THE KITCHEN, TO A WALL WHERE ALL THE KNIVES HANG SPARKLING AND GLITTERING ... AND IN HER HYSTERIA, THE MOTHER SEES A FIGURE BEFORE HER...
DADDY MURDERED ME, MAMA! HE MURDERED ME!
YES, DARLING, I KNOW HE DID! AND NOW HE'LL DIE... DIE LIKE A DOG!
THE RAZOR SHARP CLEAVER IS PLACED IN A PAPER BAG AND MARIE WALKS SLOWLY AND DELIBERATELY TO THE ALLEY BEHIND THE GOURMET... IT IS ONLY EARLY AFTERNOON AND FRANCOIS DOES NOT FINISH WORK UNTIL MIDNIGHT... BUT MARIE HAS PATIENCE, LOTS OF PATIENCE...
HE'S A MURDERER! A COLD-BLOODED MURDERER!
EMPLOYEES ENTRANCE THE GOURMET
MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE GOURMET, UNAWARE THAT HIS WIFE AWAITS HIM OUTSIDE, FRANCOIS PREPARES HIS SPECIALTY...
HURRY UP, IDIOTS! BRING ME THE STUFFING, THE CALVE'S HEARTS ARE READY FOR THE OVEN!

THE HOURS PASS QUICKLY AND AT MIDNIGHT FRANCOIS DONS HIS ELEGANT CAPE, PICKS UP HIS CANE, AND BIDS HIS ASSISTANTS GOOD NIGHT...

ADIEU, PIGS! MAKE THOSE DISHES SHINE!

NOW, FRANCOIS... THE TIME IS NOW!

THE CHEF'S EYES ARE UNACCUSTOMED TO THE INKY DARKNESS OF THE ALLEY AND HE DOES NOT SEE THE FIGURE LOOMING UP BEHIND HIM...

DUM DE DUM-- I LOVE PARIS IN THE WINTER...

THIS IS FOR MICHEL, MY FINE HUSBAND! A PRESENT FROM YOUR SON!

THE CLEAVER HITS ITS MARK WITH DEADLY ACCURACY. FRANCOIS DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A CHANCE TO SCREAM AS THE BLADE SPLITS HIS BRAIN IN HALF...

BUT MERE DEATH IS NOT ENOUGH FOR MARIE. THE LOSS OF MICHEL HAS AFFECTED HER BRAIN AND IN THE QUIET OF THE ALLEY THE BLOODY INSTRUMENT OF REVENGE RISES AND FALLS... RISES AND FALLS...

EVEN DEATH IS TOO GOOD FOR YOU, FRANCOIS! I WANT YOU TO SUFFER MORE AND MORE... AND MORE... AND MORE...

IT IS LATE THE FOLLOWING MORNING NOW AND THE ASSISTANT COOKS OF THE GOURMET ARE ENTERING THE KITCHEN. TCH... TCH... TCH, POOR MEN, THEY'VE JUST FINISHED BREAKFAST AND THEIR STOMACHS AREN'T PREPARED FOR THE SIGHT WHICH GREETS THEM! MARIE SNEAKED INTO THE RESTAURANT LAST NIGHT AFTER EVERYONE HAD GONE HOME AND COOKED A LITTLE MEAL IN REMEMBRANCE OF FRANCOIS. WHOEVER SAID THAT FRANCOIS WAS THE COOK IN THE NICOLE FAMILY WAS WRONG... MARIE REALLY SHOWED THEM A FEW NEW TRICKS WHEN SHE WHIPPED UP THIS LITTLE FEAST! YEP, YOU MIGHT EVEN SAY SHE GAVE THEM A LITTLE FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

OH-H, MY GOD!

UGHHH! (GAG!)

FRANCOIS' FAMOUS STUFFED HEART

FRANCOIS' FAMOUS BAKED KIDNEYS

FRANCOIS' FAMOUS FRIED BRAINS

THE END

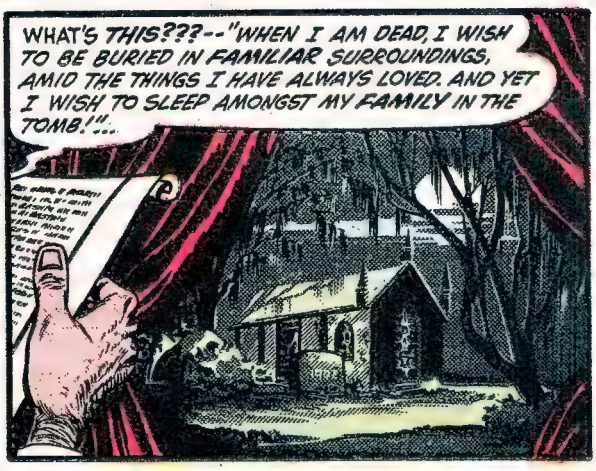
WHEN DEATH COMES FOR THE GUILTY THERE IS NO TURNING BACK FROM THE BECKONING GRAVE, THE ENDLESS DARKNESS, THE FESTERING HORROR! THE PULSE QUICKENS, THE HEART BEATS FASTER AT THE FEARFUL SIGHT OF...
SHADOWS ON THE TOMB
CAROLYN!! STAY AWAY FROM ME!! DIDN'T I GIVE YOU THE ROOM YOU WANTED???
AT THE PRICE OF MY LIFE!! THE DEAD SPIRITS OF MY FAMILY WILL AVENGE ME!!!
IN THE BEDROOM OF THE WEALTHY DUNNS, THE HUSBAND SPEAKS WITH THE FAMILY DOCTOR--AND LEARNS A SHOCKING TRUTH ABOUT HIS WIFE!...
---AND IN SUCH A CONDITION, IT'S COMMON FOR THE PATIENT TO FALL INTO LONG TRANCES WHICH RESEMBLE DEATH!! SHE MUST BE CAREFULLY WATCHED!!
I SEE, DOCTOR!!
AN INVALID!! AND ALL THE MONEY IS HERS--THE INHERITANCE OF HER FAMILY BURIED IN THE TOMB!! IF SHE WERE DEAD---

Black Cat Mystery #34, April 1952. Art: Joe Certa. Publisher: Harvey Comics.

AND AS THE WEEKS PASS, THE THOUGHT OF VIOLENT DEATH BECOMES MORE REAL, MORE IMMEDIATE, UNTIL IT BECOMES A MALIGNANT OBSESSION IN THE HUSBAND'S TORTURED MIND!...
I LOVE THIS ROOM, MILO! I DON'T EVEN MIND BEING HERE--DAY AFTER DAY!
TOO BAD YOU CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER--FOR NOW YOU MUST--

--DIE!!
AARGH-H-H!!

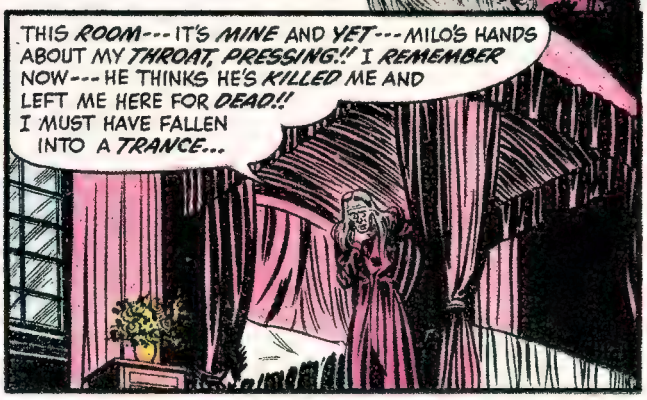
I MUST FIND HER WILL NOW!! SHE MUST HAVE LEFT THE ENTIRE ESTATE TO ME--BUT I'VE GOT TO BE SURE!!

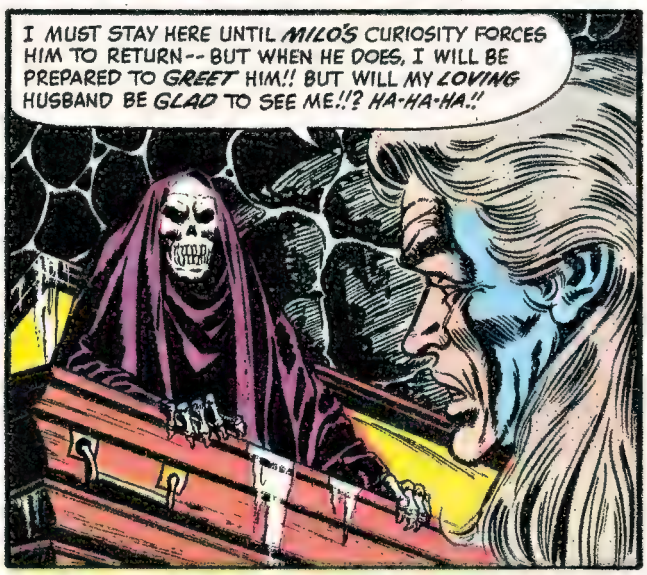

WHAT'S THIS???--"WHEN I AM DEAD, I WISH TO BE BURIED IN FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS, AMID THE THINGS I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED. AND YET I WISH TO SLEEP AMONGST MY FAMILY IN THE TOMB!"...

And SO THE HUSBAND, SATISFIED THAT HE HAS GAINED THE INHERITANCE, SETS ABOUT TO OBEY HIS WIFE'S STRANGE REQUEST!...
DO YOU UNDERSTAND--I WANT AN EXACT REPLICA OF OUR BEDROOM BUILT IN THE TOMB!! NOTHING MUST BE CHANGED!!!
IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT, MR. DUNN!!

SOME TIME LATER...
HERE IS MY GIFT-IN-DEATH FOR YOU, MY DEAR!! YOUR ANCESTORS REST BESIDE YOU---AND YOU ARE IN YOUR BELOVED ROOM!!

A MOMENT LATER, WITHIN THE DEATHLY SILENCE OF THE TOMB, A LIFELESS FIGURE BEGINS TO STIR-- AND THE CHILL OF ETERNAL SLEEP BEGINS TO DISAPPEAR!...


THIS ROOM--- IT'S MINE AND YET--- MILO'S HANDS ABOUT MY THROAT, PRESSING!! I REMEMBER NOW--- HE THINKS HE'S KILLED ME AND LEFT ME HERE FOR DEAD!! I MUST HAVE FALLEN INTO A TRANCE...


I MUST STAY HERE UNTIL MILO'S CURIOSITY FORCES HIM TO RETURN-- BUT WHEN HE DOES, I WILL BE PREPARED TO GREET HIM!! BUT WILL MY LOVING HUSBAND BE GLAD TO SEE ME!!? HA-HA-HA!!

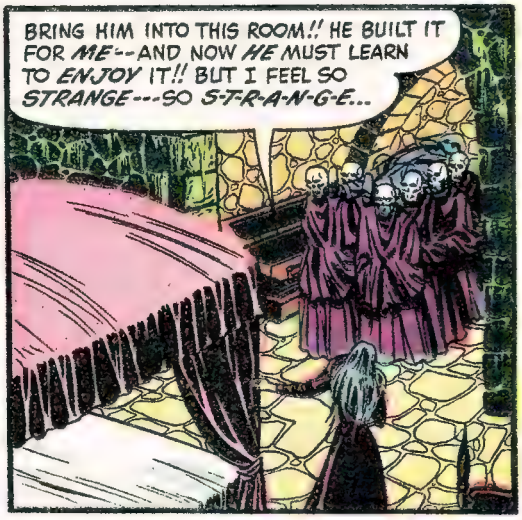
FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE TOMB, A VOICE CRIES OUT. THE DREADFUL WORDS IT SPEAKS CUTTING THE TERRIBLE SILENCE LIKE KNIVES!...
O, SPIRITS OF THE DEAD WHO LIVE IN THIS TOMB, HELP ME TO DESTROY THE MAN WHO PLACED ME HERE!! I SWEAR YOU TO THIS TASK!!

SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER, THE HUSBAND APPEARS AT THE TOMB, DRAWN THERE BY A SILENT BUT FRIGHTENING FORCE HE CANNOT EXPLAIN!...
WHY HAVE I COME HERE?? IT'S ALMOST AS IF I COULD HEAR A DISTANT ECHO OF CAROLYN'S VOICE, CALLING...CALLING...
THERE SHE IS--EXACTLY AS I LEFT HER!! ONE WOULD THINK SHE WERE ONLY---
AHHH-H-H-H-H!!!
CAROLYN!!! YOU'RE--- YOU'RE---
YOU DON'T SEEM VERY HAPPY TO SEE ME, MILO!!!
CONFRONTED BY THE WALKING SHROUD THAT WAS ONCE HIS WIFE, MILO RUSHES IN WILD PANIC FROM THE DEADLY ROOM HE CREATED!!...
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!!
COME BACK!! YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME NOW!!!
THE DOOR WON'T OPEN!! I'M TRAPPED!!! TRAPPED WITH THE DEAD!!

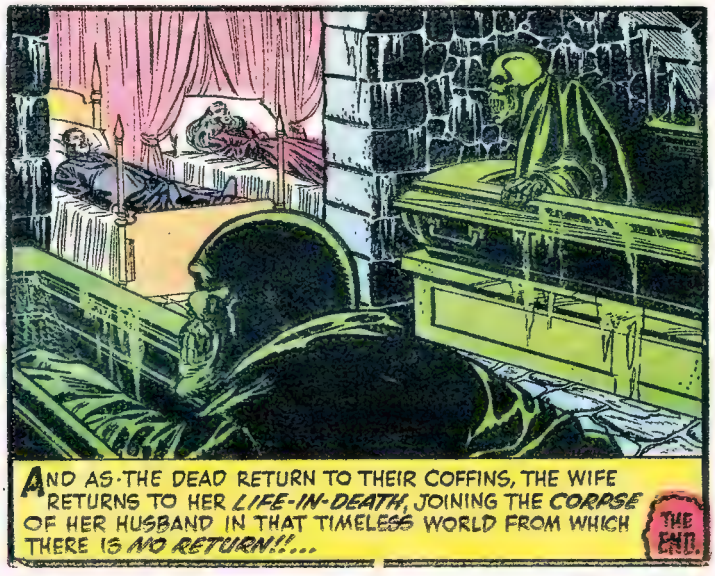
YOUR TIME HAS COME, SPIRITS OF MY ANCESTORS!! PURSUE HIM UNTIL THE LIFE HE SOUGHT TO TAKE FROM ME HAS LEFT HIS BODY!!

ONE BY ONE, THE COFFINS GIVE UP THEIR DEAD, UNTIL A HORDE OF AVENGING DEMONS MARCH RELENTLESSLY TOWARDS THEIR VICTIM!...
KEEP AWAY!!! DON'T COME NEAR ME!! YAAH-H-H!!!

AAARRGGHH

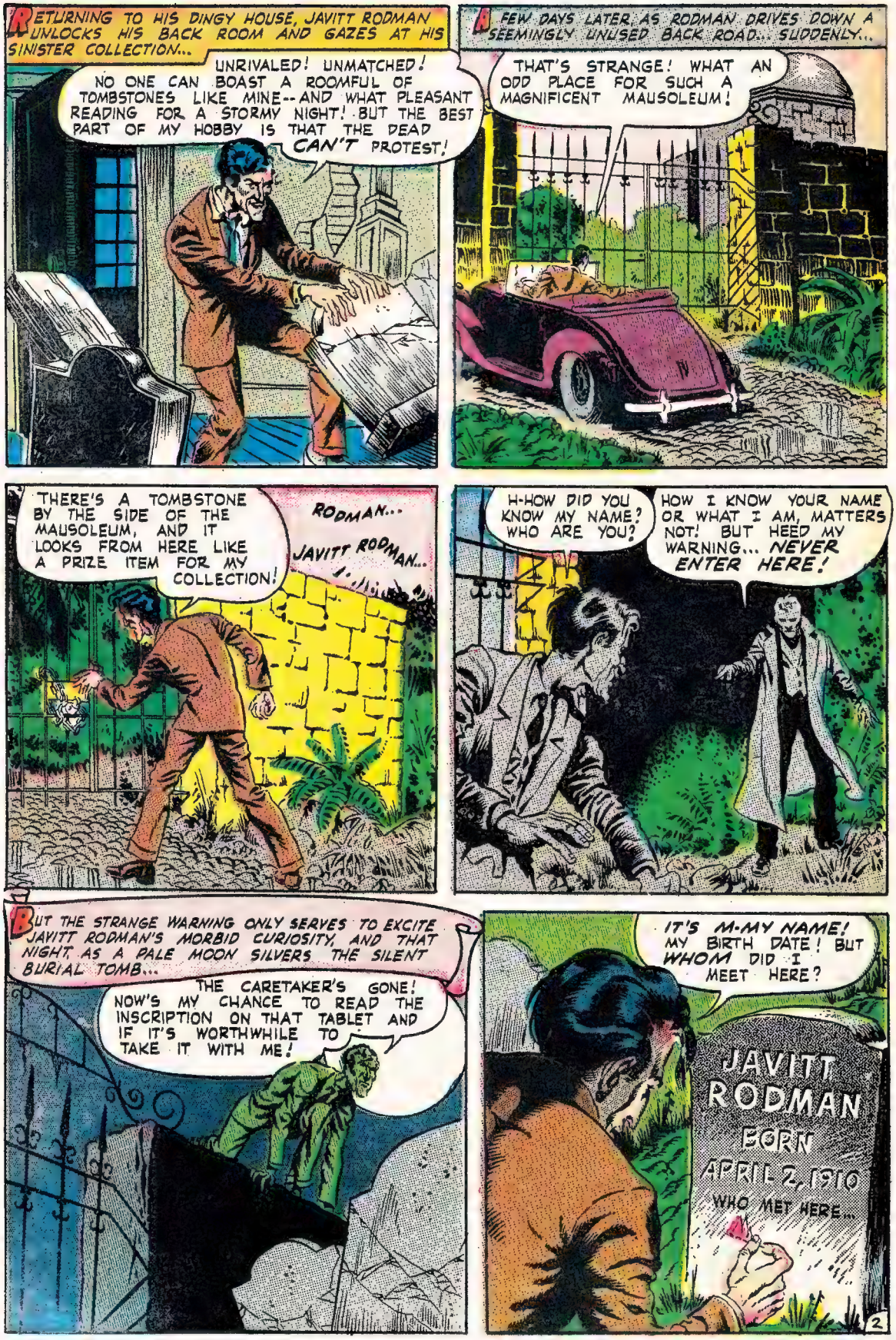

BRING HIM INTO THIS ROOM!! HE BUILT IT FOR ME--AND NOW HE MUST LEARN TO ENJOY IT!! BUT I FEEL SO STRANGE---SO S-T-R-A-N-G-E...

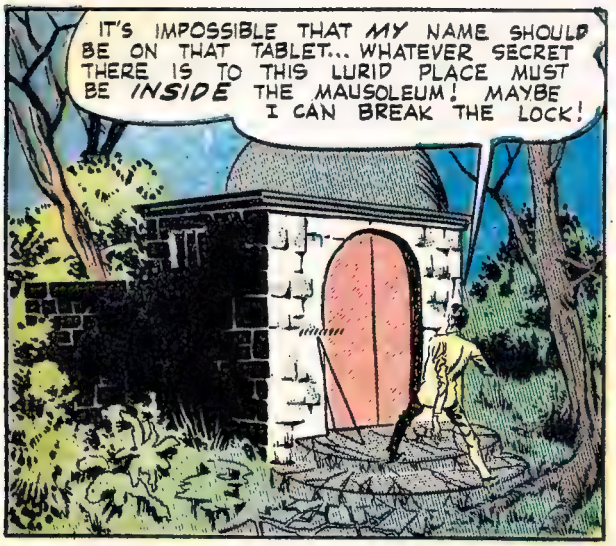
THIS ROOM IS OURS NOW, MILO... YOURS AND MINE...YOURS AND...

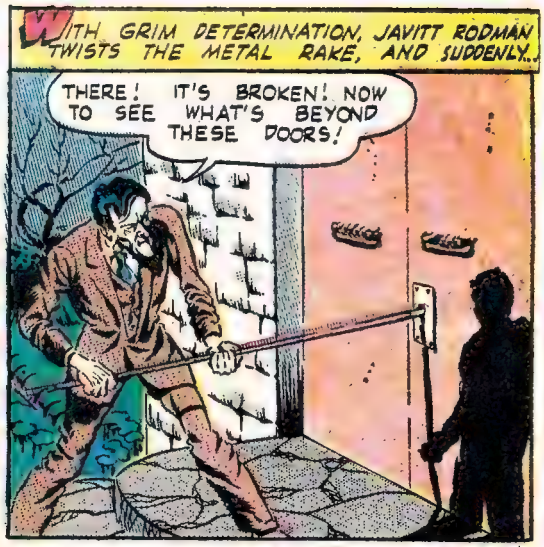

AND AS THE DEAD RETURN TO THEIR COFFINS, THE WIFE RETURNS TO HER LIFE-IN-DEATH, JOINING THE CORPSE OF HER HUSBAND IN THAT TIMELESS WORLD FROM WHICH THERE IS NO RETURN!!...
THE END

Javitt Rodman had a macabre hobby...he collected tombstones. But he little suspected that one day, he himself might be collected by that grim, terrifying collector from beyond who haunts the final resting places of mouldering bones as a...
GUEST of the GHOULS
NO! NO! YOU CAN'T BURY ME YET! I'M NOT LIKE YOU VILE CREATURES -- I'M STILL ALIVE!
SUCH A TRIFLING DIFFERENCE HARDLY MERITS NOTICE HERE IN THE GRAVEYARD OF THE DEAD!
SID CHECK
SOME PEOPLE ARE CONTENT TO HUNT FOR HUMOROUS EPITAPHS ON TOMBSTONES AND JOT THEM DOWN; BUT JAVITT RODMAN CARRIED THAT GRUESOME PASTIME ONE STEP FURTHER...
NO ONE'S AROUND THIS OLD DESERTED CEMETERY AND THIS CARVED TOMBSTONE IS ONE OF THE MISSING ITEMS FROM MY COLLECTION--I HAVE NO TOMBSTONE WITH AN INSCRIPTION ABOUT A WIFE-MURDERER!
THERE! IT'S MINE! MAY THE KILLER'S CORPSE REST IN PEACE -- BUT HIS GRAVESTONE RESTS IN MY HOUSE FROM NOW ON!

Beware #7, January 1954. Art: Sid Check. Publisher: Trojan Magazines.

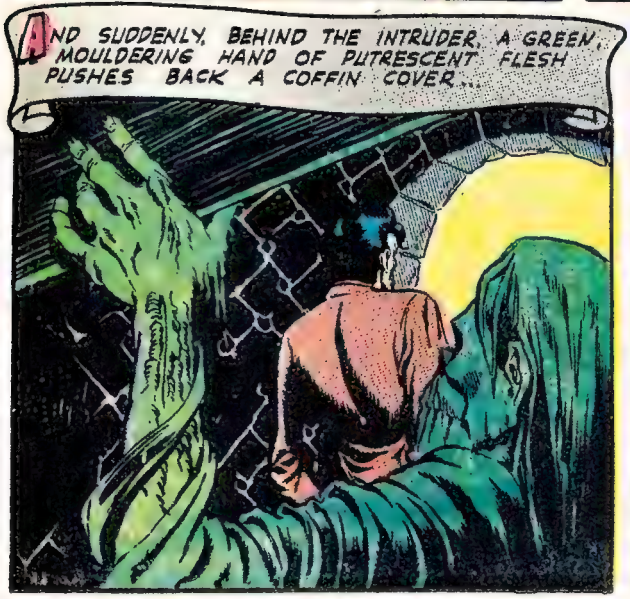

RETURNING TO HIS DINGY HOUSE, JAVITT RODMAN UNLOCKS HIS BACK ROOM AND GAZES AT HIS SINISTER COLLECTION...
UNRIVALED! UNMATCHED! NO ONE CAN BOAST A ROOMFUL OF TOMBSTONES LIKE MINE--AND WHAT PLEASANT READING FOR A STORMY NIGHT! BUT THE BEST PART OF MY HOBBY IS THAT THE DEAD CAN'T PROTEST!
A FEW DAYS LATER, AS RODMAN DRIVES DOWN A SEEMINGLY UNUSED BACK ROAD... SUDDENLY...
THAT'S STRANGE! WHAT AN ODD PLACE FOR SUCH A MAGNIFICENT MAUSOLEUM!
THERE'S A TOMBSTONE BY THE SIDE OF THE MAUSOLEUM, AND IT LOOKS FROM HERE LIKE A PRIZE ITEM FOR MY COLLECTION!
RODMAN... JAVITT RODMAN...
H-HOW DID YOU KNOW MY NAME? WHO ARE YOU?
HOW I KNOW YOUR NAME OR WHAT I AM, MATTERS NOT! BUT HEED MY WARNING... NEVER ENTER HERE!
BUT THE STRANGE WARNING ONLY SERVES TO EXCITE JAVITT RODMAN'S MORBID CURIOSITY, AND THAT NIGHT, AS A PALE MOON SILVERS THE SILENT BURIAL TOMB...
THE CARETAKER'S GONE! NOW'S MY CHANCE TO READ THE INSCRIPTION ON THAT TABLET AND IF IT'S WORTHWHILE TO TAKE IT WITH ME!
IT'S M-MY NAME! MY BIRTH DATE! BUT WHOM DID I MEET HERE?
JAVITT RODMAN BORN APRIL 2, 1910 WHO MET HERE...
2


IT'S IMPOSSIBLE THAT MY NAME SHOULD BE ON THAT TABLET... WHATEVER SECRET THERE IS TO THIS LURID PLACE MUST BE INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM! MAYBE I CAN BREAK THE LOCK!


WITH GRIM DETERMINATION, JAVITT RODMAN TWISTS THE METAL RAKE, AND SUDDENLY...
THERE! IT'S BROKEN! NOW TO SEE WHAT'S BEYOND THESE DOORS!

WITH A MENACING SCREECH, THE HEAVY MARBLE DOORS ARE PULLED OPEN, AND A DARK SHADOWY FORM FLUTTERS BY...
A BAT! BUT I'M CERTAIN THAT'S THE ONLY LIVING THING IN THIS SILENT TOMB!

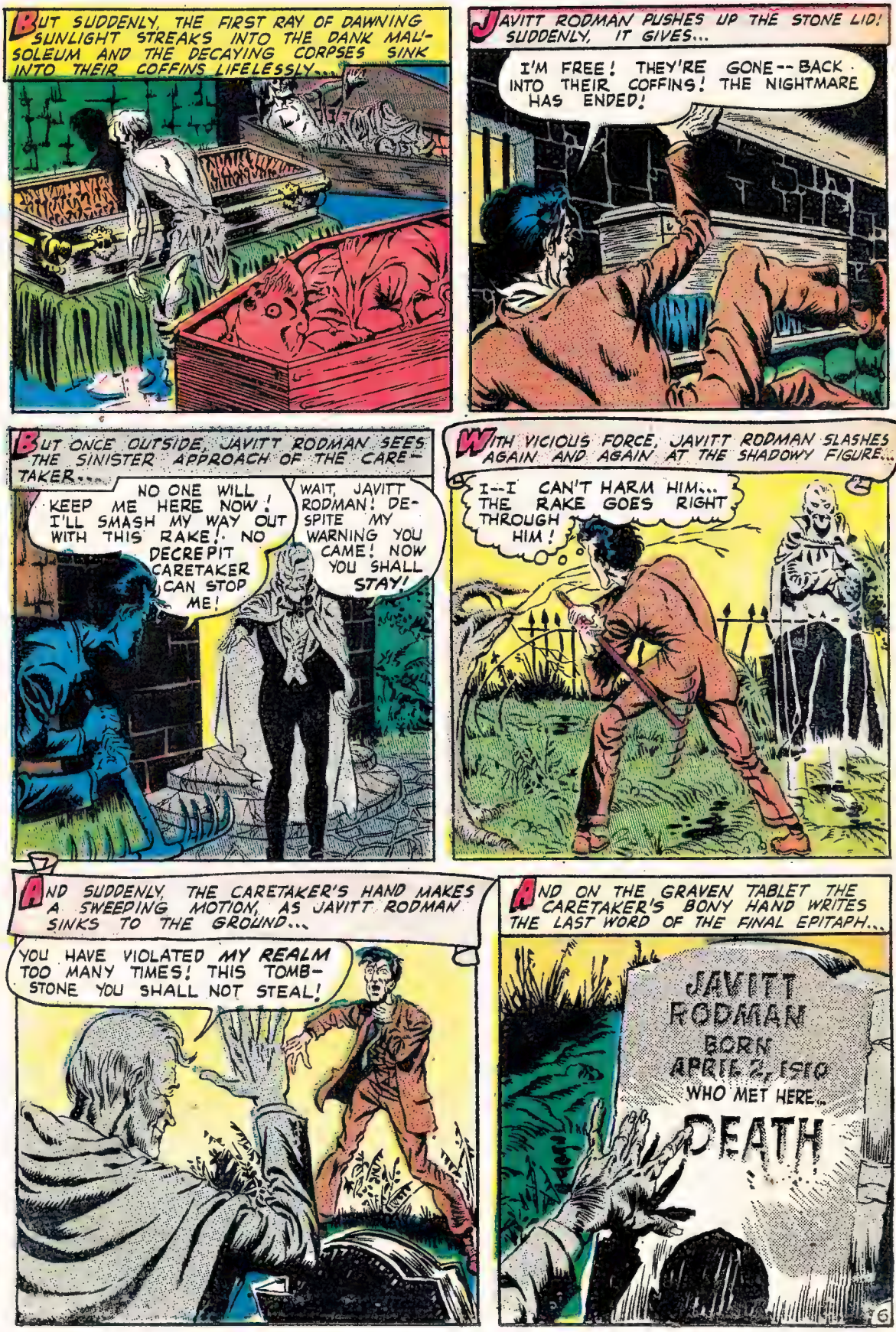
FIVE COFFINS, BUT ONE IS OPEN AND EMPTY!


AND SUDDENLY, BEHIND THE INTRUDER, A GREEN, MOULDERING HAND OF PUTRESCENT FLESH PUSHES BACK A COFFIN COVER...

WELCOME, JAVITT RODMAN! WE HAVE LONG BEEN EXPECTING YOU!
YES, AFTER ALL, YOU ARE ONE OF US!
3

N-NO! YOU'RE DEAD! KEEP AWAY FROM ME! WE HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON! NOTHING!
BUT WE DO-- WE ARE ALL VIOLATERS OF GRAVES!
WE UNBURIED THE DEAD WHILE WE WERE THE LIVING AND STOLE WHAT WE WANTED! YOU HAVE ROBBED THE DEAD OF THEIR ONLY IDENTITY AFTER DEATH-- THEIR TOMBSTONES!
NO! NO!
AND TONIGHT, YOU HAVE OPENED THE DOOR FOR US! THERE IS A GRAVEYARD NEAR! COME! THERE IS GHOULISH WORK TO BE DONE!
BUT THE CLAMMY, ROTTING HANDS OF THE LIVING DEAD TIGHTEN AROUND JAVITT RODMAN, AND HE IS FORCED ALONG TO A DESERTED NEARBY CEMETERY...
HERE, JAVITT RODMAN, TROPHIES FOR US ALL! YOU MAY HAVE YOUR PICK OF TOMBSTONES!
WHILE WE LOOT THE GRAVES!
AND AS JAVITT RODMAN STARES IN INCREDULOUS HORROR, THE FANTASTIC CREATURES HE HAS RELEASED, BEGIN THEIR SORDID WORK...
AH! THE LIVING ARE SUCH SENTIMENTAL FOOLS! THEY ALWAYS BURY THEIR DEAD WITH RINGS ON--GOLDEN RINGS!
AND BY ANOTHER UNEARTHED COFFIN, A PAIR OF SNIPING SCISSORS BEGIN THEIR LOATHFUL TASK...
HAIR... I ALWAYS GOT A GOOD PRICE FROM THE WIGMAKERS FOR THESE STOLEN LOCKS!
AND WITH AN EERIE, CREAKING SOUND, A THIRD COFFIN IS PRIED OPEN...
COSTLY WINDING SHEETS ALWAYS BROUGHT A HIGH SUM AND THE DEAD ARE NEVER COLD--WE KNOW! AND SO SHALL YOU!
NO! I'VE SEEN ENOUGH! I WON'T STAY WITH YOU!
4

BUT STRUGGLE IS USELESS, AND AS THE MOON SINKS, JAVITT RODMAN IS DRAGGED BACK TO THE MAUSOLEUM...
LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
COME! BACK TO THE COFFIN WITH US! ONE IS EMPTY--WAITING FOR YOU! EACH NIGHT YOU CAN JOIN OUR GHOULISH RAIDS!
IN WILD DESPERATION, JAVITT RODMAN TRIES TO FREE HIMSELF, BUT HE IS HELD IN A DEATH GRIP...
WHY STRUGGLE? YOU ARE LIKE US! YOU HAVE COME TO JOIN US!
WHERE'S THE CARETAKER? IF HE'D ONLY COME, HE'D HELP ME NOW!
THE "CARETAKER" WOULD HELP HIM! FOOL! DON'T YOU KNOW WHO HE IS?
HE IS YOUR ENEMY AND OUR ENEMY! WE ALL HAVE VIOLATED HIS KINGDOM!
NO! STOP! I'M NOT DEAD LIKE YOU! I WANT TO LIVE!
THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM HERE! WE ARE YOUR FRIENDS! JOIN US! THIS COFFIN IS YOURS!
NO! IN THE NAME OF MERCY!--STOP!
WE HAVE SHOWN NO MERCY TO THE DEAD! WHY SHOULD WE SHOW IT TO THE LIVING?
AND AS THE TERRIFIED GRAVE-THIEF IS SHOVED DOWN INTO THE COLD, STONE COFFIN, THE HEAVY LID IS PRESSED RELENTLESSLY DOWN...
CAN'T PUSH IT OFF... THERE'LL BE NO AIR IN HERE... I'LL SUFFOCATE!
5


BUT SUDDENLY, THE FIRST RAY OF DAWNING SUNLIGHT STREAKS INTO THE DANK MAUSOLEUM AND THE DECAYING CORPSES SINK INTO THEIR COFFINS LIFELESSLY...
JAVITT RODMAN PUSHES UP THE STONE LID! SUDDENLY, IT GIVES...
I'M FREE! THEY'RE GONE--BACK INTO THEIR COFFINS! THE NIGHTMARE HAS ENDED!
BUT ONCE OUTSIDE, JAVITT RODMAN SEES THE SINISTER APPROACH OF THE CARETAKER...
NO ONE WILL KEEP ME HERE NOW! I'LL SMASH MY WAY OUT WITH THIS RAKE! NO DECREPIT CARETAKER CAN STOP ME!
WAIT, JAVITT RODMAN! DESPITE MY WARNING YOU CAME! NOW YOU SHALL STAY!
WITH VICIOUS FORCE, JAVITT RODMAN SLASHES AGAIN AND AGAIN AT THE SHADOWY FIGURE...
I--I CAN'T HARM HIM... THE RAKE GOES RIGHT THROUGH HIM!
AND SUDDENLY, THE CARETAKER'S HAND MAKES A SWEEPING MOTION, AS JAVITT RODMAN SINKS TO THE GROUND...
YOU HAVE VIOLATED MY REALM TOO MANY TIMES! THIS TOMBSTONE YOU SHALL NOT STEAL!
AND ON THE GRAVEN TABLET THE CARETAKER'S BONY HAND WRITES THE LAST WORD OF THE FINAL EPITAPH...
JAVITT RODMAN
BORN APRIL 2, 1910
WHO MET HERE...
DEATH
6

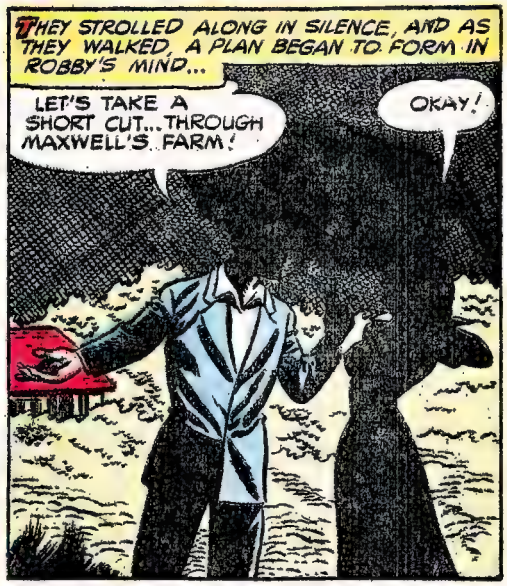
HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN URGE TO DO SOMETHING BIG OR DARING OR SHOCKING... SOMETHING THAT WOULD MAKE PEOPLE TAKE NOTICE OF YOU? THEN YOU CAN PROBABLY UNDERSTAND THE EMOTIONS THAT WERE INVOLVED WHEN ROBBY ANNOUNCED,
I KILLED MARY
HE'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING!
HE'S SUCH A WEAKLING!
HE'S SUCH AN AWKWARD BOY!
WHAT A SQUARE!
TRAPANI • FINOCCHIARO
ROBBY HAD ALWAYS BEEN A SLOW, AWKWARD CHILD... NONDESCRIPT IN APPEARANCE... COMPLETELY LACKING IN PERSONALITY... HE WAS SO QUIET THAT HIS FOLKS OFTEN FORGOT THAT HE WAS AROUND...
COME ON, KENNY, ALBERT, SUSAN... WE'RE GOING DOWN TO THE LAKE!... OH, AND YOU TOO, ROBBY!
OTHER CHILDREN HARDLY EVER INCLUDED HIM IN THEIR GAMES BECAUSE HE WAS NEVER MUCH GOOD AT ANYTHING...
HOW ABOUT ROBBY?
AHH... WE DON'T NEED HIM... HE ALWAYS DROPS THE BALL!

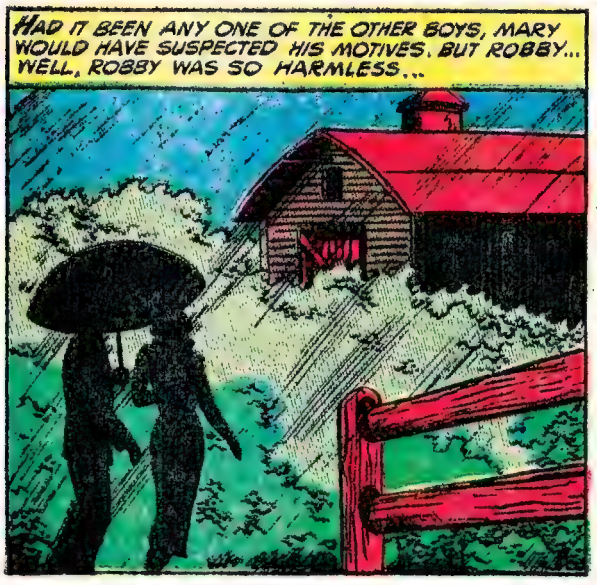
Weird Mysteries #8, January 1954. Pencils: Sal Trapani; inks: S. Finocchiaro. Publisher: Stanley Morse.

AND SO ROBBY GREW INTO ADOLESCENCE... LEFT OUT... UNWANTED... IGNORED...
COME ON, MARY, I'LL BUY YOU A SODA!
YEAH... LET'S ALL GO!

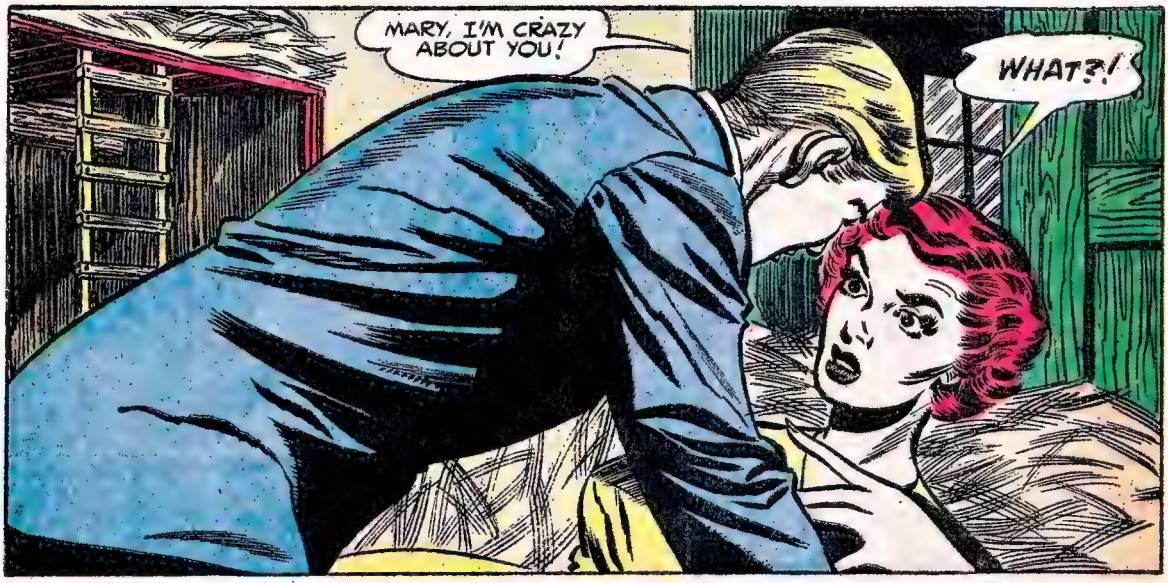
MARY WAS THE PRETTIEST GIRL IN SCHOOL... ALSO THE WILDEST. BOYS TRIPPED OVER EACH OTHER TO GET NEAR HER. BUT ROBBY JUST LOOKED ON... FROM A DISTANCE... TOO SHY TO APPROACH HER... WATCHING HER... DESIRING HER... HATING HER!

ONE RAINY DAY, ROBBY SAW MARY WALKING HOME ALONE. SOMEWHERE HE FOUND A SPARK OF COURAGE...
CAN I HOLD YOUR UMBRELLA FOR YOU, MARY?
HUH, OH, SURE, ROBBY. YOU STARTLED ME!


THEY STROLLED ALONG IN SILENCE, AND AS THEY WALKED, A PLAN BEGAN TO FORM IN ROBBY'S MIND...
LET'S TAKE A SHORT CUT... THROUGH MAXWELL'S FARM!
OKAY!


HAD IT BEEN ANY ONE OF THE OTHER BOYS, MARY WOULD HAVE SUSPECTED HIS MOTIVES. BUT ROBBY... WELL, ROBBY WAS SO HARMLESS...

AND SO, WHEN HE SUGGESTED THAT THEY STOP FOR A MOMENT IN MAXWELL'S BARN, SHE DIDN'T EVEN HESITATE. ROBBY WATCHED HER AS SHE STRETCHED OUT IN THE HAY...


MARY, I'M CRAZY ABOUT YOU!
WHAT?!

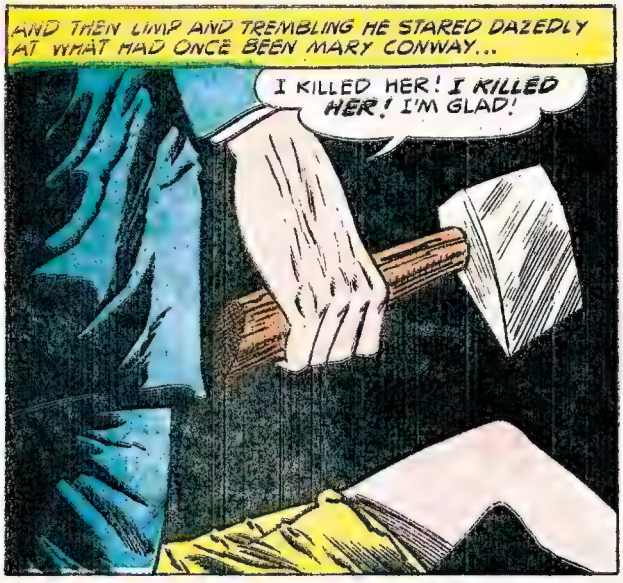
YOU'RE JUST CRAZY, IF YOU ASK ME! NOW LET ME GO!
WHY SHOULD I?

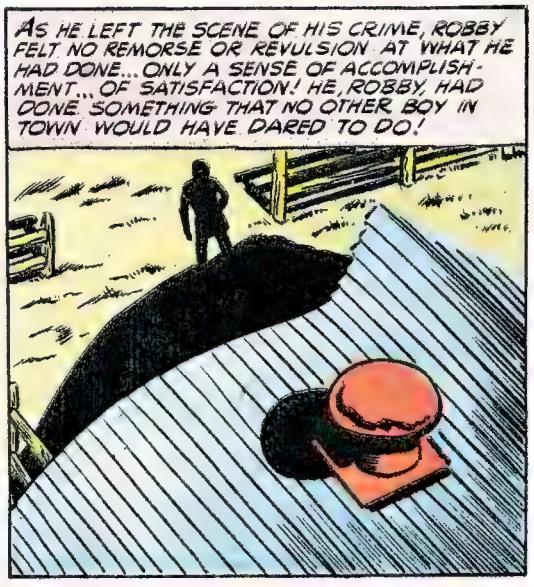
EVERYBODY KNOWS WHAT KIND OF GIRL YOU ARE... DON'T TRY TO BE COY WITH ME... YOU AREN'T SO SQUEMISH WITH OTHER FELLOWS!!
YES, BUT THE OTHER FELLOWS ARE ROUGH AND STRONG AND I LIKE THEM THAT WAY!

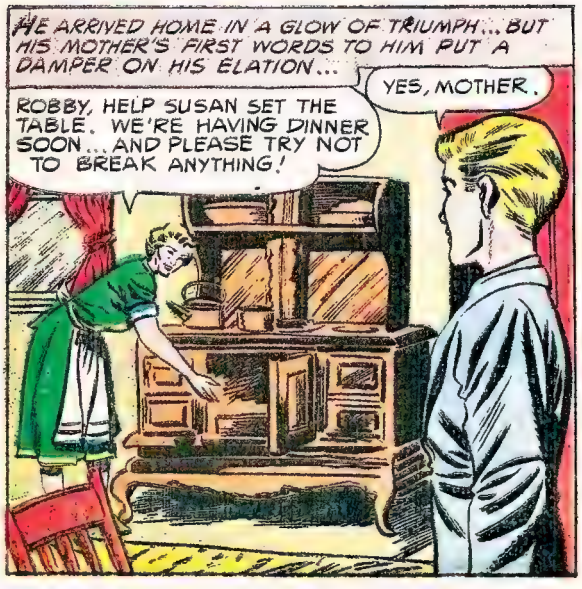
YOU'RE JUST A WEAK-KNEED SISSY, AND I WOULDN'T LET YOU KISS ME IF YOU WERE THE LAST BOY ON EARTH!
A WEAK-KNEED SISSY, AM I... I'LL SHOW YOU!

NO...NO-OOOOO..

BLINDED BY FRUSTRATION AND FURY, HE SWUNG THE AXE AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN...


AND THEN LIMP AND TREMBLING HE STARED DAZEDLY AT WHAT HAD ONCE BEEN MARY CONWAY...
I KILLED HER! I KILLED HER! I'M GLAD!


AS HE LEFT THE SCENE OF HIS CRIME, ROBBY FELT NO REMORSE OR REVULSION AT WHAT HE HAD DONE... ONLY A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT... OF SATISFACTION! HE, ROBBY, HAD DONE SOMETHING THAT NO OTHER BOY IN TOWN WOULD HAVE DARED TO DO!


HE ARRIVED HOME IN A GLOW OF TRIUMPH... BUT HIS MOTHER'S FIRST WORDS TO HIM PUT A DAMPER ON HIS ELATION...
ROBBY, HELP SUSAN SET THE TABLE. WE'RE HAVING DINNER SOON... AND PLEASE TRY NOT TO BREAK ANYTHING!
YES, MOTHER.

I SAW YOU CARRYING MARY CONWAY'S BOOKS THIS AFTERNOON, ROBBY... I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD IT IN YOU. SHE'S A VERY PRETTY GIRL.
NOT ANY MORE, SHE ISN'T!

WHY, DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO HER?
YOU MIGHT SAY THAT... I KILLED HER!
HA HA...VERY FUNNY! YOU KILLED HER...AND I SUPPOSE YOU CHOPPED HER INTO TINY PIECES AND ATE HER UP...
I DIDN'T EAT HER, BUT YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THE TINY PIECES!
ROBBY'S SISTER SCOFFED AT HIS REMARKS... NATURALLY SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE A WORD OF IT, BUT AT DINNER THAT EVENING...
OH, DAD, DID SUSAN TELL YOU? I KILLED MARY CONWAY THIS AFTERNOON... CHOPPED HER UP WITH MR. MAXWELL'S AXE!
PLEASE, MOTHER, MUST WE LISTEN TO SUCH DISGUSTING TALK?
STOP THAT, ROBBY! THE DINNER TABLE IS NO PLACE TO EXHIBIT YOUR MORBID SENSE OF HUMOR!
BUT I DID! I REALLY DID! WHY CAN'T YOU BELIEVE ME?! SHE'S IN MAXWELL'S BARN, LYING IN A POOL OF BLOOD!
SIT DOWN, ROBBY, AND STOP ACTING LIKE A FOOL! THE VERY IDEA OF YOUR KILLING MARY... HAH! YOU WOULDN'T HAVE NERVE ENOUGH TO STEP ON A ROACH, LET ALONE KILL ANYONE!
I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT BOY. DO YOU SUPPOSE WE OUGHT TO TAKE HIM TO A PSYCHIATRIST?
HEAVENS, SAM...THE BOY IS AS NORMAL AS YOU OR I! PSYCHIATRIST INDEED!
5

AND ROBBY REALIZED SUDDENLY THAT IT HAD ALL BEEN IN VAIN. THEY REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE THE THING THAT HE HAD DONE... EVEN THE SHOCK OF MURDER COULD NOT MAKE THEM SEE...

IT'S NO USE. THEY DON'T BELIEVE... THEY JUST DON'T BELIEVE ME...

WHEN ROBBY DIDN'T RETURN HOME THAT NIGHT, HIS FAMILY BECAME WORRIED. THE NEXT MORNING THEY WENT LOOKING FOR HIM. SOMEONE REMEMBERED HIS MENTIONING MAXWELL'S BARN...

THERE THEY FOUND HIM...

ROBBY! OH NO!

GOOD HEAVENS!

THEY ALSO FOUND MARY...

JUMPING JEHOSOPHAT! LOOK HERE!

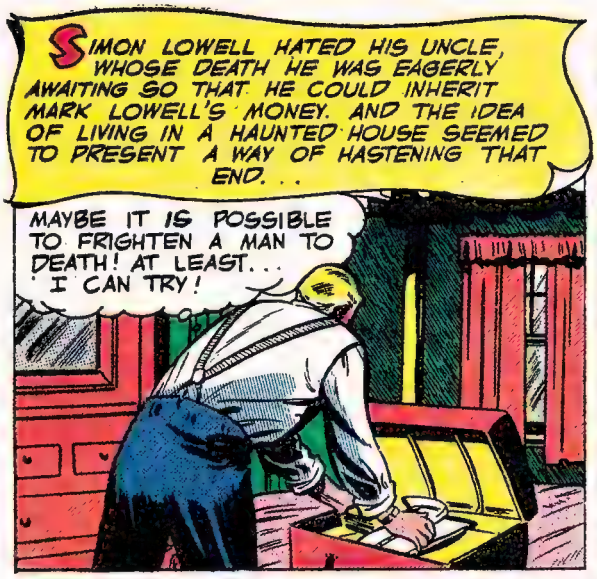
THE POLICE CALLED IT A CLEAR CASE OF MURDER AND SUICIDE. BUT THEY ATTRIBUTED THE MURDER TO SOME WANDERING MANIAC, AND THE SUICIDE ... WELL, EVERYONE AGREED THAT ROBBY MUST HAVE BEEN SECRETLY IN LOVE WITH MARY, AND WHEN HE DISCOVERED HER BODY... WELL, IT MUST HAVE BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIS SENSITIVE NERVES...

AND SO ROBBY, WHO WANTED DESPERATELY TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR SOME DEED OF DARING WAS CHEATED EVEN UNTO THE GRAVE... FOR EVERYONE KNOWS THAT ROBBY COULDN'T HURT A FLY!

THE END

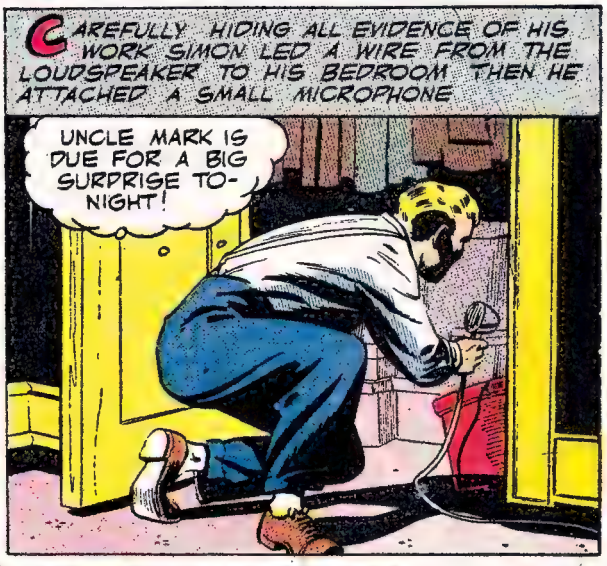
The Haunter
YOU ARE A MURDERER!
MURDERER!
YOU MUST DIE
KILLER
YOU MUST PAY FOR YOUR CRIME!
SIMON LOWELL WAS AN EVIL MAN, AND EVIL WAS HIS UNDOING! IT ALL STEMMED FROM AN OVERPOWERING GREED... GREED THAT USED THE POWER OF SUGGESTION TO KILL. WHEN THE DEED WAS ACCOMPLISHED, AND ALL THAT SIMON WANTED SEEMED TO BE WITHIN HIS GRASP... THEN THE VOICE OF TERROR WAS HEARD... AND THE HAUNTER BECAME THE HAUNTED!
IT ALL BEGAN THE MORNING MARK LOWELL AND HIS NEPHEW, SIMON, MOVED INTO MARK'S NEW HOUSE...
YOU PROMISED TO TELL ME HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO BUY THIS PLACE SO CHEAP UNCLE.
I WAS AFRAID TO LET YOU KNOW THE REAL REASON.. AFRAID YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO COME TO LIVE WITH ME, AND I DO WANT COMPANY NOW THAT I'M GETTING OLD!
YOU SEE.. THIS HOUSE HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING HAUNTED! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?
I THINK PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN GHOSTS ARE FOOLS... STUPID FOOLS!

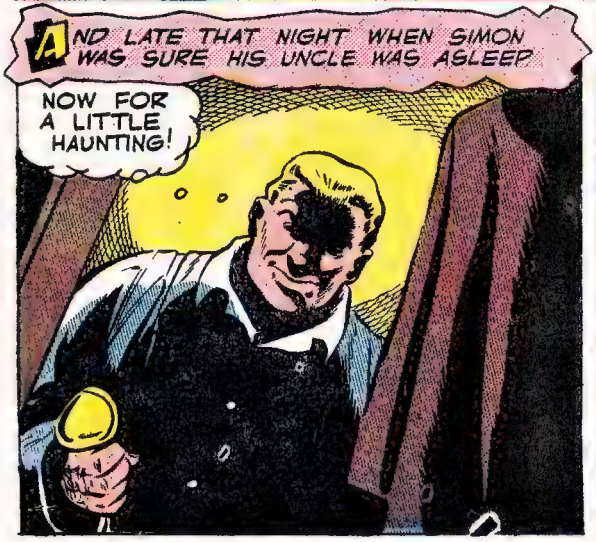
Weird Horrors #4, November 1952. Pencils attributed to Don Perlin; inks attributed to Abe Simon. Publisher: St. John.


SIMON LOWELL HATED HIS UNCLE, WHOSE DEATH HE WAS EAGERLY AWAITING SO THAT HE COULD INHERIT MARK LOWELL'S MONEY. AND THE IDEA OF LIVING IN A HAUNTED HOUSE SEEMED TO PRESENT A WAY OF HASTENING THAT END. . .
MAYBE IT IS POSSIBLE TO FRIGHTEN A MAN TO DEATH! AT LEAST... I CAN TRY!

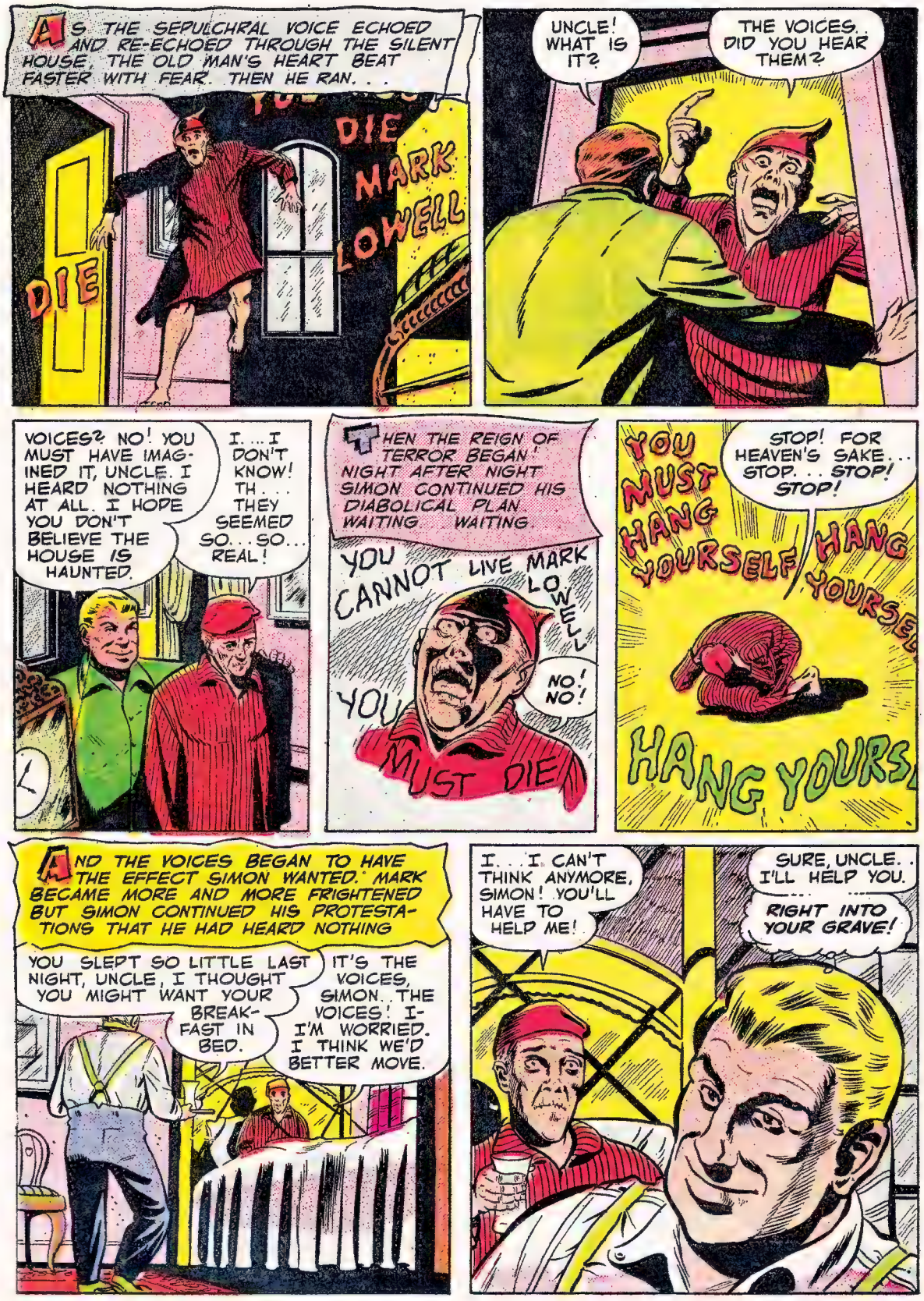
DURING THE NEXT WEEK SIMON MADE SEVERAL PURCHASES IN VARIOUS ELECTRICAL SHOPS IN TOWN AND THEN WAITED FOR THE PROPER MOMENT
I'LL BE AWAY ALL DAY, SIMON.
ALL RIGHT UNCLE I'LL TAKE CARE OF THINGS

AS SOON AS MARK LOWELL LEFT, SIMON SET TO WORK HURRIEDLY
HE'LL NEVER FIND THIS LOUD SPEAKER IN HERE!

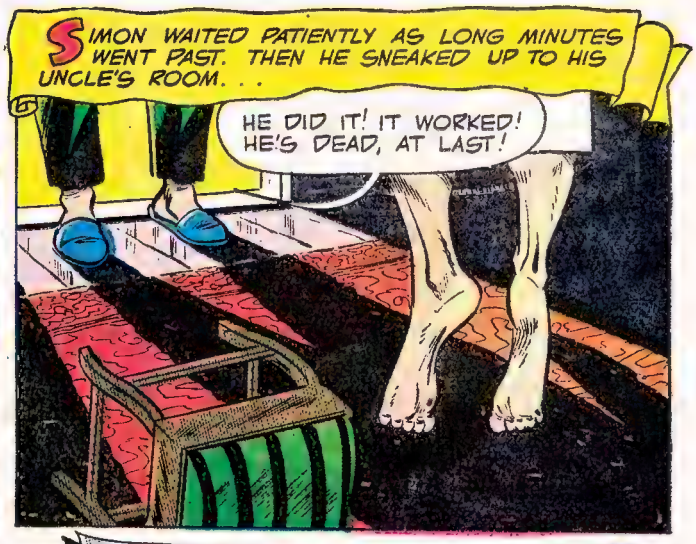

CAREFULLY HIDING ALL EVIDENCE OF HIS WORK SIMON LED A WIRE FROM THE LOUDSPEAKER TO HIS BEDROOM THEN HE ATTACHED A SMALL MICROPHONE
UNCLE MARK IS DUE FOR A BIG SURPRISE TO-NIGHT!

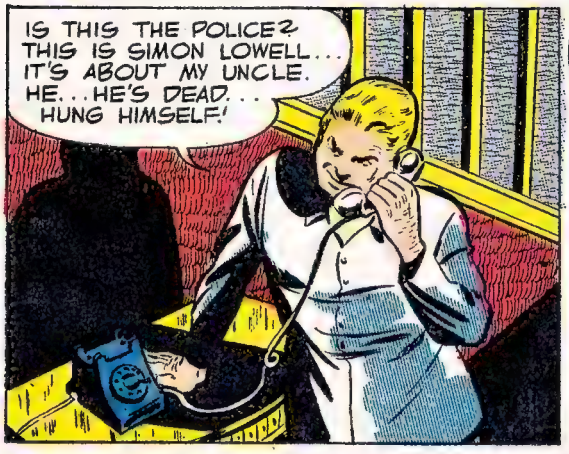

AND LATE THAT NIGHT WHEN SIMON WAS SURE HIS UNCLE WAS ASLEEP
NOW FOR A LITTLE HAUNTING!

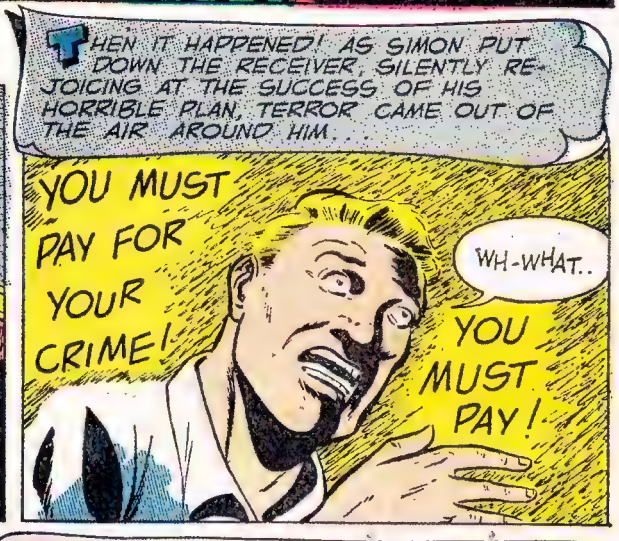
WH WHAT
MARK LOWELL YOU MUST DIE!
MUST DIE!
YOU CANNOT LIVE

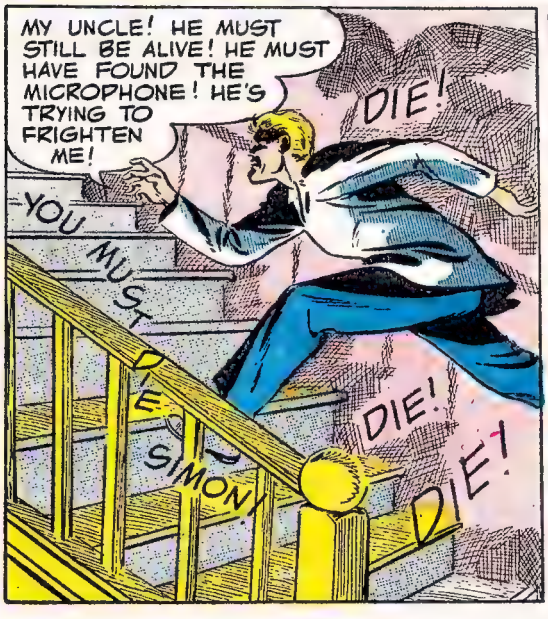

AS THE SEPULCHRAL VOICE ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED THROUGH THE SILENT HOUSE, THE OLD MAN'S HEART BEAT FASTER WITH FEAR. THEN HE RAN. . .
DIE
MARK LOWELL
DIE
UNCLE! WHAT IS IT?
THE VOICES.. DID YOU HEAR THEM?
VOICES? NO! YOU MUST HAVE IMAGINED IT, UNCLE. I HEARD NOTHING AT ALL. I HOPE YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE HOUSE IS HAUNTED.
I....I DON'T KNOW! TH... THEY SEEMED SO...SO... REAL!
THEN THE REIGN OF TERROR BEGAN! NIGHT AFTER NIGHT SIMON CONTINUED HIS DIABOLICAL PLAN WAITING WAITING
YOU CANNOT LIVE MARK LOWELL
NO! NO!
YOU MUST DIE
YOU MUST HANG YOURSELF
STOP! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE... STOP... STOP! STOP!
HANG YOURSELF
HANG YOURSELF
AND THE VOICES BEGAN TO HAVE THE EFFECT SIMON WANTED. MARK BECAME MORE AND MORE FRIGHTENED BUT SIMON CONTINUED HIS PROTESTATIONS THAT HE HAD HEARD NOTHING
YOU SLEPT SO LITTLE LAST NIGHT, UNCLE, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT YOUR BREAKFAST IN BED.
IT'S THE VOICES, SIMON. THE VOICES! I-I'M WORRIED. I THINK WE'D BETTER MOVE.
I...I CAN'T THINK ANYMORE, SIMON! YOU'LL HAVE TO HELP ME!
SURE, UNCLE.. I'LL HELP YOU.
RIGHT INTO YOUR GRAVE!

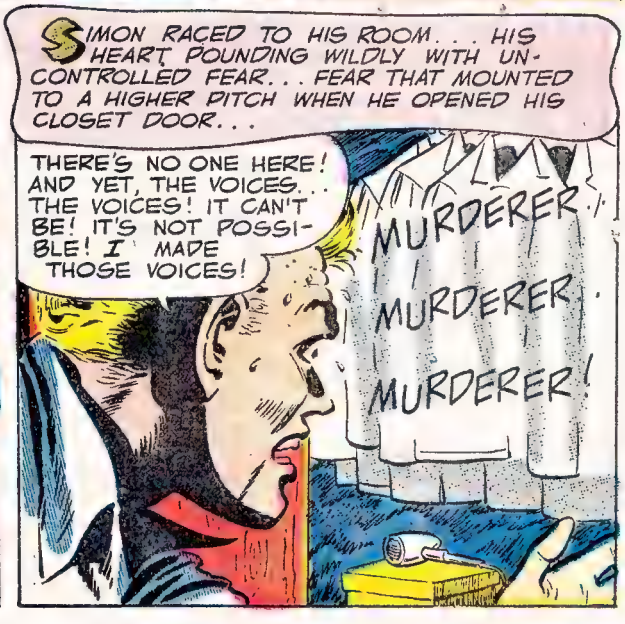
ONE NIGHT SIMON FELT SURE HE WOULD SOON SEE THE RESULT OF HIS WORK . . . HIS UNCLE WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE GHOSTLY VOICE . . .
HANG YOURSELF MARK LOWELL! HANG YOURSELF!


SIMON WAITED PATIENTLY AS LONG MINUTES WENT PAST. THEN HE SNEAKED UP TO HIS UNCLE'S ROOM. . .
HE DID IT! IT WORKED! HE'S DEAD, AT LAST!


SIMON RACED DOWNSTAIRS TO THE TELEPHONE, AND. . .
IS THIS THE POLICE? THIS IS SIMON LOWELL... IT'S ABOUT MY UNCLE. HE...HE'S DEAD... HUNG HIMSELF!


THEN IT HAPPENED! AS SIMON PUT DOWN THE RECEIVER, SILENTLY REJOICING AT THE SUCCESS OF HIS HORRIBLE PLAN, TERROR CAME OUT OF THE AIR AROUND HIM. . .
YOU MUST PAY FOR YOUR CRIME!
WH-WHAT..
YOU MUST PAY!


MY UNCLE! HE MUST STILL BE ALIVE! HE MUST HAVE FOUND THE MICROPHONE! HE'S TRYING TO FRIGHTEN ME!
DIE!
YOU MUST DIE SIMON
DIE!
DIE!


SIMON RACED TO HIS ROOM. . . HIS HEART POUNDING WILDLY WITH UNCONTROLLED FEAR. . . FEAR THAT MOUNTED TO A HIGHER PITCH WHEN HE OPENED HIS CLOSET DOOR. . .
THERE'S NO ONE HERE! AND YET, THE VOICES... THE VOICES! IT CAN'T BE! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! I MADE THOSE VOICES!
MURDERER!
MURDERER!
MURDERER!

SIMON RUSHED OUT INTO THE HALL-WAY. . . CONSCIOUS ONLY OF THE VOICES THAT REVERBERATED THROUGH THE HOUSE. BUT COMING TOWARDS HIM FROM HIS UNCLE'S ROOM, HE SAW. . .

UNCLE MARK! NO! YOU'RE DEAD! YOU'RE DEAD!

YOU ARE A MURDERER, SIMON! YOU MUST PAY FOR YOUR CRIME! PAY FOR YOUR CRIME!

THE APPARITION. . . THE THING THAT HAD ONCE BEEN MARK LOWELL. . . CAME CLOSER. . . REPEATING THE DREAD ACCU-SATION OVER AND OVER AGAIN, UNTIL SOMETHING SNAPPED IN SIMON'S HALF-CRAZED MIND. . .

OHHHHH!

YOU MUST DIE! YOU MUST DIE!

WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVED, THERE WAS NO ANSWER TO THEIR RING. THEY FINALLY ENTERED THE HOUSE BY FORCING A WINDOW.

THIS ONE'S DEAD, ALL RIGHT! FROM THE LOOKS OF HIM. . . I'D SAY HE DIED OF FRIGHT!

LOOK OVER HERE!

I GUESS THIS IS THE MAN WE RE-CEIVED THE CALL ABOUT! WONDER WHAT KILLED THE OTHER ONE!

I DON'T KNOW!

BETTER CALL THE CORONER..

YEAH. . . AND MAKE IT SNAPPY. I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

AND THAT WAS EX-ACTLY HOW EVERYONE ELSE FELT. AFTER THAT THE OLD HOUSE WAS BOARDED UP AND NO ONE WOULD EVER OCCUPY IT AGAIN! THE VOICES IN THE WALL WERE STILLED FOREVER!

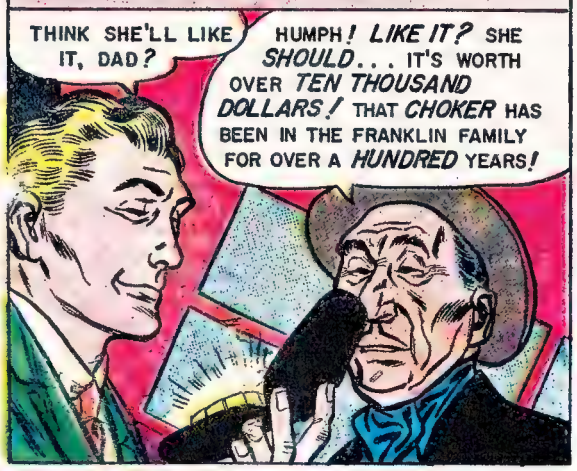
THE END.

HEH, HEH, HEH, *WELCOME* TO ANOTHER ISSUE OF *HORROR* AND *TERROR*, FELLOW *FIENDS!* WE HOPE YOUR *HIDEOUS* APPETITES ARE *WHETTED* FOR PAGE AFTER PAGE OF *DELICIOUS DELVING* INTO *DEVILTRY!* WE'VE GOT YOUR *FOUL FARE* ALL PREPARED SO *GRAB* UP YOUR *PITCHFORKS* AND LET'S BEGIN WITH A TALE WE CALL ——— ——— ———

THE CHOKER

THE MAN'S TWISTED SHAPE SWINGS GROTESQUELY IN THE DARKNESS. HIS NECK IS BROKEN AND HIS TONGUE HAS BEEN FORCED OUT OF HIS MOUTH. THIS IS THE STORY OF HIS DEATH; HIS MURDER! IT IS TOLD BY AN OLD FRIEND OF HIS, A DIAMOND NECKLACE! READ ON — — — IF YOU DARE!

FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS I'VE LAID IN THE MUSTY VAULT AT THE THIRD NATIONAL BANK, MY PRICELESS DIAMONDS SPARKLING INTO THE UNSEEING DARKNESS. I AM A CHOKER: A SOLID GOLD NECKLACE DECORATED WITH OVER THREE CARATS OF BLUE-WHITE DIAMONDS! BUT NOW THOSE LONG YEARS ARE OVER. I'VE BEEN FREED FROM MY IMPRISONMENT . . .


THINK SHE'LL LIKE IT, DAD?
HUMPH! *LIKE IT?* SHE *SHOULD*... IT'S WORTH OVER *TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS!* THAT *CHOKER* HAS BEEN IN THE FRANKLIN FAMILY FOR OVER A *HUNDRED* YEARS!

PAUL FRANKLIN'S FINGERS CARESS MY GOLD LINKS AND AS HE TALKS I LEARN WHY I'VE BEEN REMOVED FROM THE BANK VAULT . . .

MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER WORE IT, MY GRANDMOTHER WORE IT, MY MOTHER WORE IT... AND NOW MY *BRIDE* WILL WEAR IT!
I HOPE *NORA* REALIZES WHAT A *LUCKY* GIRL SHE IS, PAUL! THE WOMAN WHO MARRIES A FRANKLIN IS TO BE *ENVIED!*

Mysterious Adventures #21, August 1954. Art attributed to Ross Andru. Publisher: Story Comics.

I SPEND THE AFTERNOON AT THE JEWELERS BEING POLISHED AND CLEANED AND FINALLY, THAT EVENING, I MEET NORA HAYNES, THE GIRL PAUL IS GOING TO MARRY! THE GIRL WHOSE NECK I WILL ADORN . . .

OH, PAUL DARLING, IT'S *EXQUISITE!* THE MOST *GORGEOUS* THING I'VE *EVER* SEEN!

ANYONE AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU SHOULD HAVE BEAUTIFUL THINGS, DARLING!

AS PAUL AND NORA KISS I'M FILLED WITH A WONDROUS JOY. ONCE MORE I'M ALIVE AND ADMIRED! ONCE MORE I'M A MEMBER OF THE FRANKLIN FAMILY! I SMILE AS PAUL POURS OUT HIS LOVE FOR NORA! THE LAST TIME I SAW PAUL HE WAS ONLY A CHILD FIVE YEARS OLD, BUT NOW HE'S A MAN . . .

HONEY, I'M *CRAZY* ABOUT YOU . . .

TOMORROW IS THE BIG DAY: THE DAY OF THE WEDDING! NORA AND PAUL SAY GOOD NIGHT AND I AM FILLED WITH AN OVERWHELMING TENDERNESS FOR THEM BOTH . . .

. . .AND DON'T *FORGET*, LADY, YOU'VE GOT AN *IMPORTANT* DATE TOMORROW!

NEVER FEAR, DARLING, I WON'T FORGET!

AFTER PAUL LEAVES NORA CLOSES THE DOOR AND SETTLES INTO A BIG CHAIR, SIGHING CONTENTEDLY. I AM CONTENT TOO, ENVISIONING A FULL RICH LIFE AHEAD... UNTIL THE DOORBELL RINGS SHARPLY . . .

COME IN, DARLING, I LEFT THE DOOR OPEN!

I LOOK TOWARD THE DOOR, EXPECTING TO SEE PAUL RETURN . . . BUT THE MAN WHO WALKS ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM IS NOT PAUL. THIS MAN IS DARK AND HIS EYES ARE EVIL . . . .

HOW'D IT GO, HONEY? EVERYTHING ALL SET?

EVERYTHING'S *PERFECT*, DARLING! THE IDIOT GAVE ME A LITTLE *PRESENT* TONIGHT... *UGLY*, BUT WORTH AT LEAST *10 G'S!*

THE MAN CALLED BART SITS DOWN NEXT TO NORA AND LAUGHS AS HE FINGERS MY GOLD LINKS. I HATE THIS MAN AND EVEN MORE, I HATE NORA . . .

YOU'RE RIGHT, BABY, WHEN WE *SELL* THIS THING IN A FEW MONTHS WE'LL GET A TIDY LITTLE SUM!

OH, HONEY, I HOPE IT WON'T BE *TOO* LONG BEFORE THIS WHOLE THING IS OVER! *YOU'RE* THE MAN I LOVE... THE MAN I WANT TO *MARRY!*

THEY KISS AND INSIDE OF ME THERE IS RAGE AND SORROW AND FEAR: FEAR FOR PAUL, MY BELOVED PAUL! WHAT ARE THESE TWO DIRTY SCHEMERS GOING TO DO TO HIM?

IT WON'T BE LONG, BABY. . . JUST LONG ENOUGH TO *KILL* FRANKLIN!

THEY'RE GOING TO KILL MY PAUL AND ALTHOUGH MY GOLD AND DIAMONDS SHRIEK OUT A WARNING, IT IS FUTILE! WHO CAN HEAR THE VOICE OF A CHOKER? NORA WEARS ME TO THE WEDDING ON THE FOLLOWING MORNING AND THE SIGHT OF PAUL'S GLOWING FACE ONLY MAKES ME MORE MISERABLE . . .

...AND DO YOU, PAUL FRANKLIN...

WE HONEYMOON IN BERMUDA AND POOR PAUL IS BLISSFULLY HAPPY, NOT AWARE THAT NORA IS CAREFULLY PLANNING EVERY DETAIL OF HIS FORTHCOMING MURDER!

MAIL THESE LETTERS FOR ME ON YOUR WAY TO THE BEAUTY PARLOR, WILL YOU, DARLING?

OF COURSE, PAUL.

GOOD! BART CAN USE THESE FOR A SAMPLE OF HIS HANDWRITING!

I KNOW THE WHOLE SLIMY SCHEME NOW BUT EVEN WHEN WE RETURN HOME THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO BUT LISTEN AND WATCH AS NORA CLEVERLY CONTINUES THE PLAN...

OH, MARTHA, YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME! YOU'VE KNOWN PAUL FOR YEARS! MAYBE (SOB) YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM!

WRONG? SOMETHING S WRONG WITH PAUL?

Y-YES, (SOB) HE'S SO JEALOUS! HE'S FRIGHTENING ME! ALWAYS ACCUSING ME OF FLIRTING WITH OTHER MEN! H-HE'S SOMETIMES THREATENED TO KILL ME, OR HIMSELF...OR BOTH!

PAUL'S DONE THAT? WHY, GOOD HEAVEN'S, NORA, I HAD NO IDEA!

I-I MAY LEAVE HIM SOON, MARTHA! I MAY GET A DIVORCE! I-I CAN'T LIVE THIS WAY MUCH LONGER!

MY POOR POOR DARLING! WELL, DON'T YOU WORRY, HONEY, I WON'T TELL A SOUL ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE SAID! I KNOW YOU WON'T WANT PEOPLE GOSSIPING!

MARTHA LEAVES AND NORA SITS ON THE EDGE OF THE BED LAUGHING. HOW I HATE HER!

HAHAHAHA! NO, MARTHA, I'M SURE YOU WON'T TELL ANYONE! HAHAHAHA! YOU'LL TELL EVERYBODY...JUST LIKE I WANT YOU TO!

AND THEN DURING ONE OF THEIR SECRET MEETINGS WHILE PAUL'S AT THE OFFICE, BART AND NORA DECIDE THAT THE TIME IS RIGHT . . .

...AND YOU'RE SURE MARTHA SPREAD THE WORD AROUND?

POSITIVE, DARLING! I CAN TELL BY THE WAY EVERYBODY'S LOOKING AT ME! WE SHOULD WORK FAST, BART, BEFORE THE WRONG PEOPLE HEAR IT AND START ASKING QUESTIONS!

TONIGHT IS TO BE THE NIGHT AND AS PAUL STANDS BEFORE THE MIRROR DRESSING FOR DINNER I AM FILLED WITH AN AGONIZING SADNESS: BUT THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO. I AM HELPLESS. . .
TUM-TA-TUM-TA-TEE-DUM-DEE...
ALMOST READY, HONEY? DINNER'S READY!
PAUL ENTERS THE DINING ROOM AND FOR THE FIRST TIME COMES FACE-TO-FACE WITH BART CRAWFORD. . .
YOU DIDN'T TELL ME WE WERE HAVING COMPANY, DARLING. HOW DO YOU DO MISTER...
CRAWFORD'S THE NAME, BUT CALL ME BART, OLD MAN! NORA AND I HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR YEARS. . . WE'RE REAL OLD FRIENDS!
YES, PAUL, BART AND I ARE VERY DEAR FRIENDS ...IN FACT, HE'S THE MAN I'M GOING TO MARRY!
MARRY? NORA, HONEY, ARE YOU CRAZY? YOU'RE ALREADY MARRIED... TO ME!
MY POOR PAUL LOOKS BEWILDERED AND CONFUSED AS BART AND NORA LAUGH IN HIS FACE. HE THINKS THEY'RE TEASING HIM . . .
YES, SHE'S MARRIED TO YOU NOW... BUT WITHIN A MONTH SHE'LL BE MY WIFE!
LOOK, IF THIS IS A JOKE I DON'T FIND IT VERY FUNNY!
SORRY, PAUL BABY, BUT IT'S NO JOKE! WE'RE DEADLY EARNEST!
AND THEN BART TAKES A COLD BLACK REVOLVER FROM HIS COAT POCKET AND POINTS IT AT PAUL'S HEAD. I PRAY THAT SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN TO STOP THIS HORRIBLE CRIME . . .
THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH, WHAT'S...? A GUN!
SHUT UP, FRANKLIN, AND GET YOUR HANDS UP! WE HAVEN'T GOT TIME TO WASTE!
EVERYTHING'S ALL SET IN THE BASEMENT, BART! LET'S GET HIM DOWNSTAIRS!
THEY SHOVE HIM DOWN THE STEPS LEADING TO THE BASEMENT, CRUELLY TAUNTING HIM, GLOATING AS THEY BOAST OF THEIR PLAN. . .
CAREFUL WITH HIM, HONEY, WE DON'T WANT TO BRUISE HIM!
THAT'S RIGHT, NORA, THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY MARKS. . . EXCEPT THOSE AROUND HIS NECK!
NORA, IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN, WHAT... UGHHH...
SORRY, OLD MAN, BUT WE CAN'T HAVE YOU MAKING ANY NOISE NOW!
POOR PAUL, YOU DON'T HAVE THE VAGUEST IDEA WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, DO YOU, DARLING? WELL, WHILE BART IS MAKING THE ARRANGEMENTS, I'LL EXPLAIN IT TO YOU, STUPID!
4

As he listens Paul's eyes bulge with rage and fear ...and in the background Bart unwinds the heavy coil of rope!

It's *simple*, Paul! We're going to *kill* you for your *money*! I've *never* loved you, darling... and I do so *disapprove* of marriage *without* love, don't you?

(gurgle, choke ...)

It's like a hideous nightmare as Bart tosses the rope over a beam and makes a large noose . . .

And knowing how *much* you love me, Paul, I don't want you to *worry* that I'll get caught... no, dearest, Bart and I have planned everything *carefully*! Your *death* will be listed as *suicide*!

Paul is forced up onto a chair and while I silently hope for a miracle, Bart places the noose around his neck . . .

See this, darling, it's your *suicide note*! Bart's an expert at *forging* handwriting!

Okay, Nora, enough talking! Let's get this over with!

Bart's foot kicks the chair from under Paul and the noose tightens with a sudden jerk. Paul's legs flail the empty air and his body twists grotesquely . . .

It was a *fair exchange*, Paul... *Hahahaha*! You gave me a *necklace* and I gave you a *choker*!

He dangles helplessly, his tongue forced out between his lips, his head fallen to one side. This is my Paul: dying, the victim of the lowest kind of treachery . . .

It's almost over, Nora. Just another second!

And now his movements cease. Paul is dead! I stare at his broken neck and make a vow of revenge. I don't know how, I don't know when, but someday I'll avenge his death!

The plan goes off without a hitch. The police are convinced that Paul committed suicide . . .

...and (sob) finally I couldn't stand his *jealousy* anymore and (sob) told him I wanted a *divorce*! H—he *threatened* (sob) to kill himself but I didn't believe him!

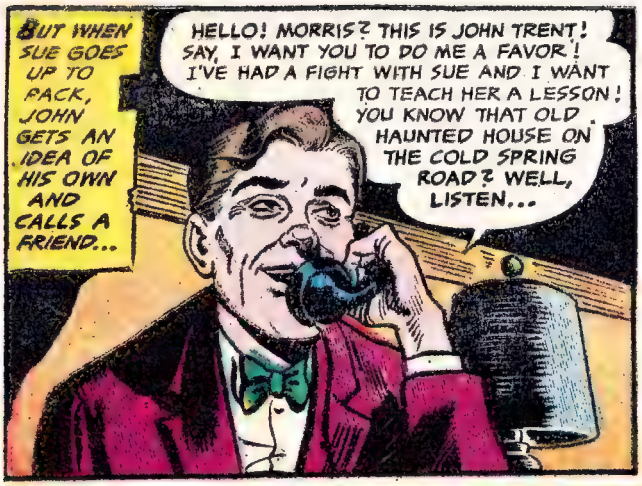
There, there, Mrs. Franklin, I know what a *shock* it must be.

AND THE GOSSIP NORA HAD SO CLEVERLY PLANTED HELPS TO BACK UP THE "SUICIDE" STORY . . . .
OH, YES, OFFICER, EVERYBODY KNEW ABOUT PAUL'S TERRIBLE JEALOUSY!
IT WAS COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT NORA INTENDED TO DIVORCE HIM!
WE ALL FELT SO SORRY FOR HER! EVERYBODY KNEW WHAT A TEMPER HE HAD!
THE POLICE EXPERTS ARE CONVINCED THAT THE HANDWRITING IN THE SUICIDE NOTE IS PAUL'S AND THUS A MONTH LATER NORA BECOMES THE LEGAL HEIR TO PAUL'S FORTUNE . . . .
IF YOU'LL JUST SIGN YOUR NAME IN THOSE THREE PLACES, MRS. FRANKLIN, THEN WE'LL BE FINISHED.
IT (SOB) SEEMS SO UNREAL; I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S DEAD!
FOR APPEARANCES SAKE SHE WAITS A MONTH BEFORE LEAVING TOWN TO MEET BART IN CANADA . . .
WE DID IT, BABY! WE DID IT!
AND GOT AWAY WITH IT!
5
BUT IN THE MONTH THAT HAS PASSED SINCE PAUL'S MURDER I'VE HIT ON A PLAN OF REVENGE... AND NOW I WAIT, READY TO STRIKE THE NEXT TIME NORA WEARS ME...
READY TO CELEBRATE, MRS. CRAWFORD?
IN JUST A SECOND, DARLING. HAND ME THE FRANKLIN NECKLACE... I MIGHT AS WELL WEAR IT ONCE MORE BEFORE WE HOCK IT!
I'D BEEN AFRAID THAT MY CHANCE MIGHT NEVER COME, THAT NORA MIGHT NOT EVER AGAIN CLASP ME AROUND HER NECK...BUT NOW I'M EXACTLY WHERE I WANT TO BE...
LET'S DRIVE TO THE COUNTRY FOR DINNER! THERE'S A ROADHOUSE ABOUT TWENTY MILES FROM HERE... WITH A GAMBLING ROOM!
WONDERFUL, BART!
I WAIT UNTIL WE REACH A SECLUDED PART OF THE HIGHWAY AND THEN I BEGIN, SLOWLY AT FIRST...
MAYBE (COUGH) AFTER A MONTH OR SO WE'LL (COUGH) RUN DOWN TO MEXICO FOR (COUGH)...
WHAT'S THE MATTER, BABY, YOU CATCHING A COLD?
YES, I WORK SLOWLY, SLOWLY, INCREASING THE PRESSURE JUST EVER SO SLIGHTLY...I WANT NORA TO SUFFER, WANT HER TO FEEL EVERY EXQUISITE MOMENT OF PAIN BEFORE SHE DIES!
I (COUGH) FEEL LIKE I'M CHOKING, LIKE I (GASP) CAN'T BREATH! IT— IT'S THIS NECKLACE, BART!
THE NECKLACE?
6

BUT EVEN AS NORA'S FINGERS FUMBLE WITH MY CLASP, MY GOLD LINKS ARE PULLING TIGHTER AND TIGHTER...
BART, HELP ME! (CHOKE) I—I CAN'T GET IT (CHOKE-GASP) OFF!
TAKE IT EASY, HONEY. KEEP CALM WHILE I PULL OFF THE ROAD!
I CAN FEEL THE MUSCLES IN NORA'S NECK BEGIN TO CONSTRICT AND I'M FILLED WITH GLEE! PAUL'S DEATH WILL NOT GO UNAVENGED! NORA WILL DIE...DIE!
BART, HURRY, (CHOKE) IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN, (GASP) HURRY!
IT'S STUCK, HONEY TRY AND HOLD STILL, THE CATCH IS JAMMED!
SHE'S DESPERATE NOW, SCREAMING WITH PAIN AND FEAR! BART PULLS AND TUGS AT MY CATCH BUT IT'S USELESS... HE'LL NEVER GET ME FROM AROUND HER NECK!
H-HELP! (GAG) GET IT OFF... OFF! I CAN'T BREATH (GASP) I'M CHOKING TO DEATH!
NORA, HONEY...
MY LINKS PULL TOGTHER IN THE FINAL LAST PULL! I BREATH DEEP, FULL OF HATRED AND LOATHING FOR THIS WOMAN WHO HAS KILLED MY BELOVED PAUL! I FEEL HER NECK CRACK, FEEL HER VEINS POP OPEN AND I GLAD! GLAD!
B-BART... AGHRRRRRRR!
NORA IS DEAD... AND AS FOR BART WELL NOW, KIDDIES, YOU CAN'T REALLY EXPECT THE POLICE TO BELIEVE THAT A NECKLACE KILLED HER!
STOP STALLING, CRAWFORD, YOU KILLED HER, ADMIT IT!
I DIDN'T, I SWEAR I DIDN'T! IT WAS THE NECKLACE... IT...
TCH, TCH, TCH... POOR BART, HE DOESN'T STAND A CHANCE, THE JURY DELIBERATES ONLY TWENTY MINUTES BEFORE BRINGING IN THEIR VERDICT...
...AND WE FIND THE DEFENDANT GUILTY OF MURDER IN THE FIRST DEGREE!
NO! NO, YOU CAN'T! I DIDN'T...
BUT HIS PLEAS ARE IN VAIN... AND HIS PUNISHMENT? BUT OF COURSE, KIDDIES, WHAT ELSE? NATCH, HE'S HANGED!
THE END

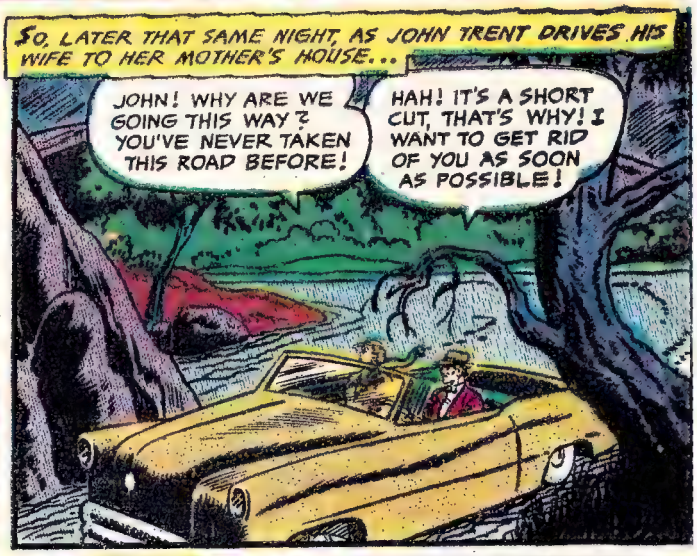
IT STARTED WITH A SIMPLE LITTLE QUARREL AND ENDED IN FEAR AND HORROR! THE OLD HOUSE MIGHT HAVE BEEN WAITING TO POUNCE, LIKE SOME PREHISTORIC MONSTER, ON THE ILL-FATED COUPLE! SO IF IT'S THRILLS AND CHILLS YOU WANT, IF YOUR BLOOD NEEDS CURDLING, READ ON! IF YOU DARE! FOR THIS IS THE STORY OF THE MURDEROUS JOKE...
Night of TERROR
SUE AND JOHN TRENT ARE HAVING A VIOLENT QUARREL...
I HATE YOU! I REALLY DO! YOU'RE STUBBORN AND OBSTINATE AND, OH, I JUST SIMPLY HATE YOU!
SO! YOU'RE NO BARGAIN, YOU KNOW! WHY DON'T YOU GO HOME TO MOTHER, AS YOU'RE ALWAYS THREATENING TO DO!
SO A FEW MINUTES LATER...
MOTHER? THIS IS SUE! I'VE HAD A QUARREL WITH JOHN! I HATE HIM! AND I'M COMING FOR A VISIT WITH YOU!
SWELL WITH ME! I'LL EVEN DRIVE YOU THERE! GO PACK YOUR THINGS!

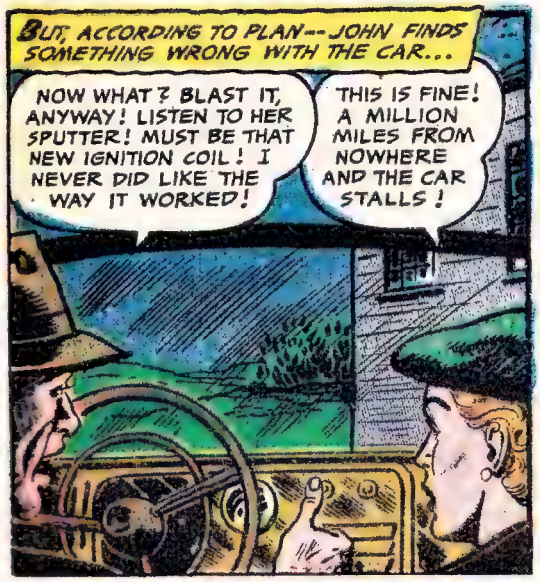
Voodoo #16, July–August 1954. Artist unknown. Publisher: Farrell.

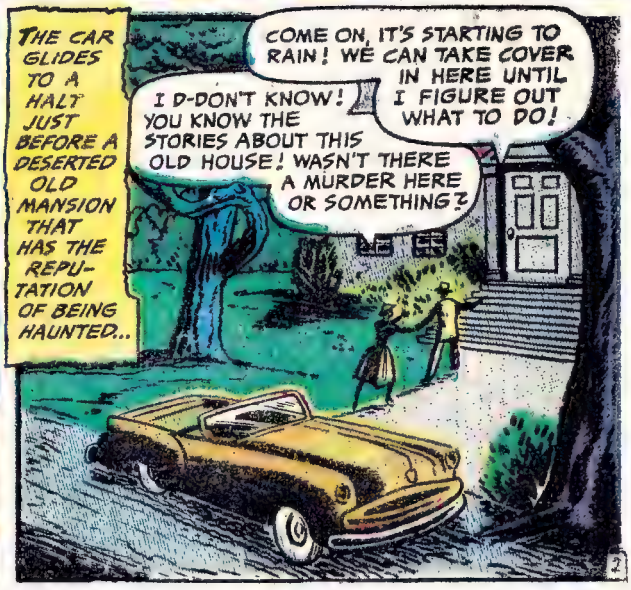

BUT WHEN SUE GOES UP TO PACK, JOHN GETS AN IDEA OF HIS OWN AND CALLS A FRIEND...
HELLO! MORRIS? THIS IS JOHN TRENT! SAY, I WANT YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR! I'VE HAD A FIGHT WITH SUE AND I WANT TO TEACH HER A LESSON! YOU KNOW THAT OLD HAUNTED HOUSE ON THE COLD SPRING ROAD? WELL, LISTEN...

HAH-HAH! SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA, JOHN! YES, I'LL DO IT, GLAD TO! HAH-HAH! WE'LL REALLY GIVE HER A GOOD SCARE! OKAY, THEN! I'LL SEE YOU THERE!

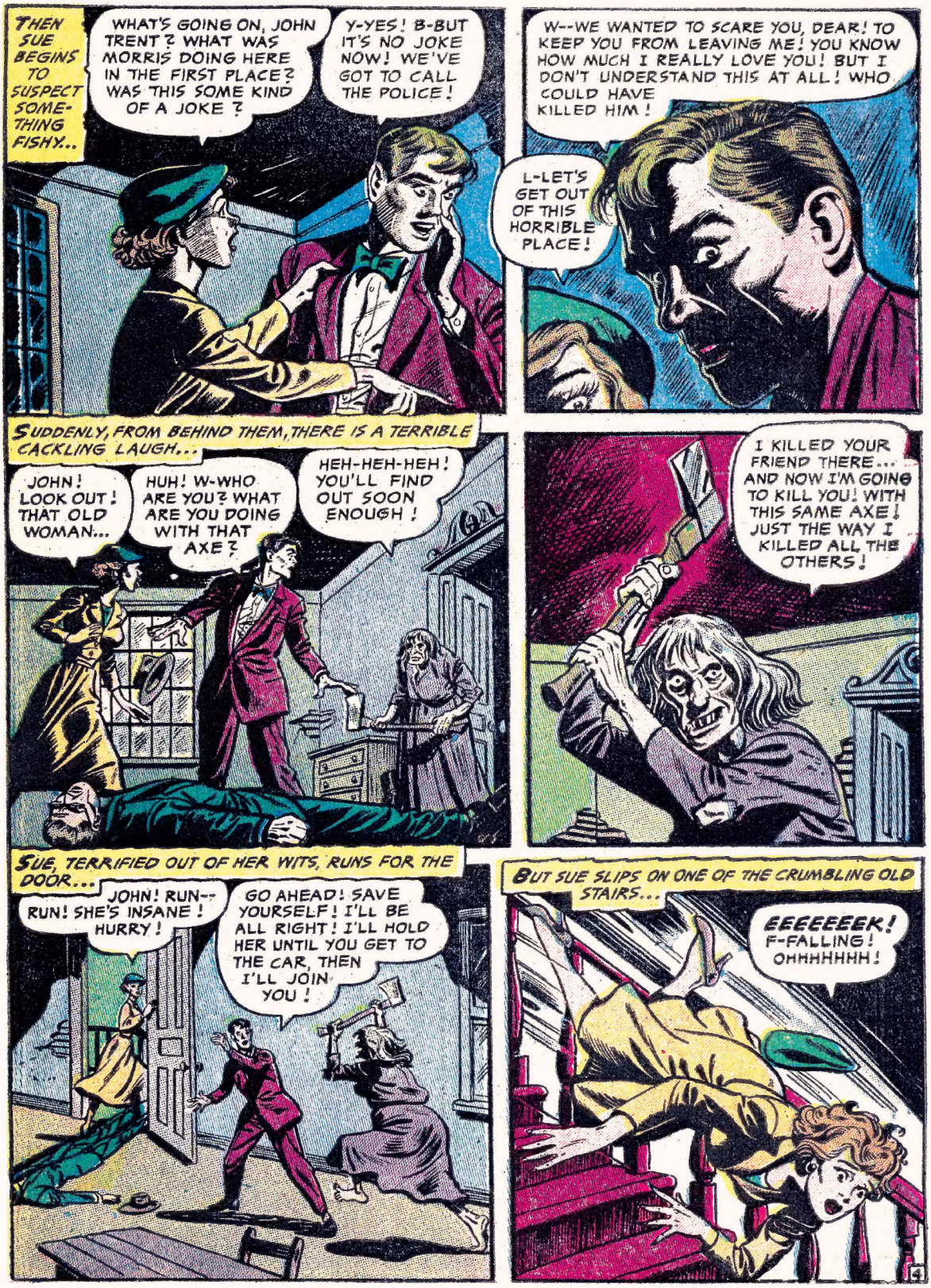
HAH-HAH! JOHN SURE HAS GOT A SENSE OF HUMOR! AND THIS WILL MAKE HIM LOOK LIKE A HERO IN SUE'S EYES, KEEP HER FROM LOSING HIM! NOW IF I CAN JUST BE A CONVINCING GHOST!


SO, LATER THAT SAME NIGHT, AS JOHN TRENT DRIVES HIS WIFE TO HER MOTHER'S HOUSE...
JOHN! WHY ARE WE GOING THIS WAY? YOU'VE NEVER TAKEN THIS ROAD BEFORE!
HAH! IT'S A SHORT CUT, THAT'S WHY! I WANT TO GET RID OF YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

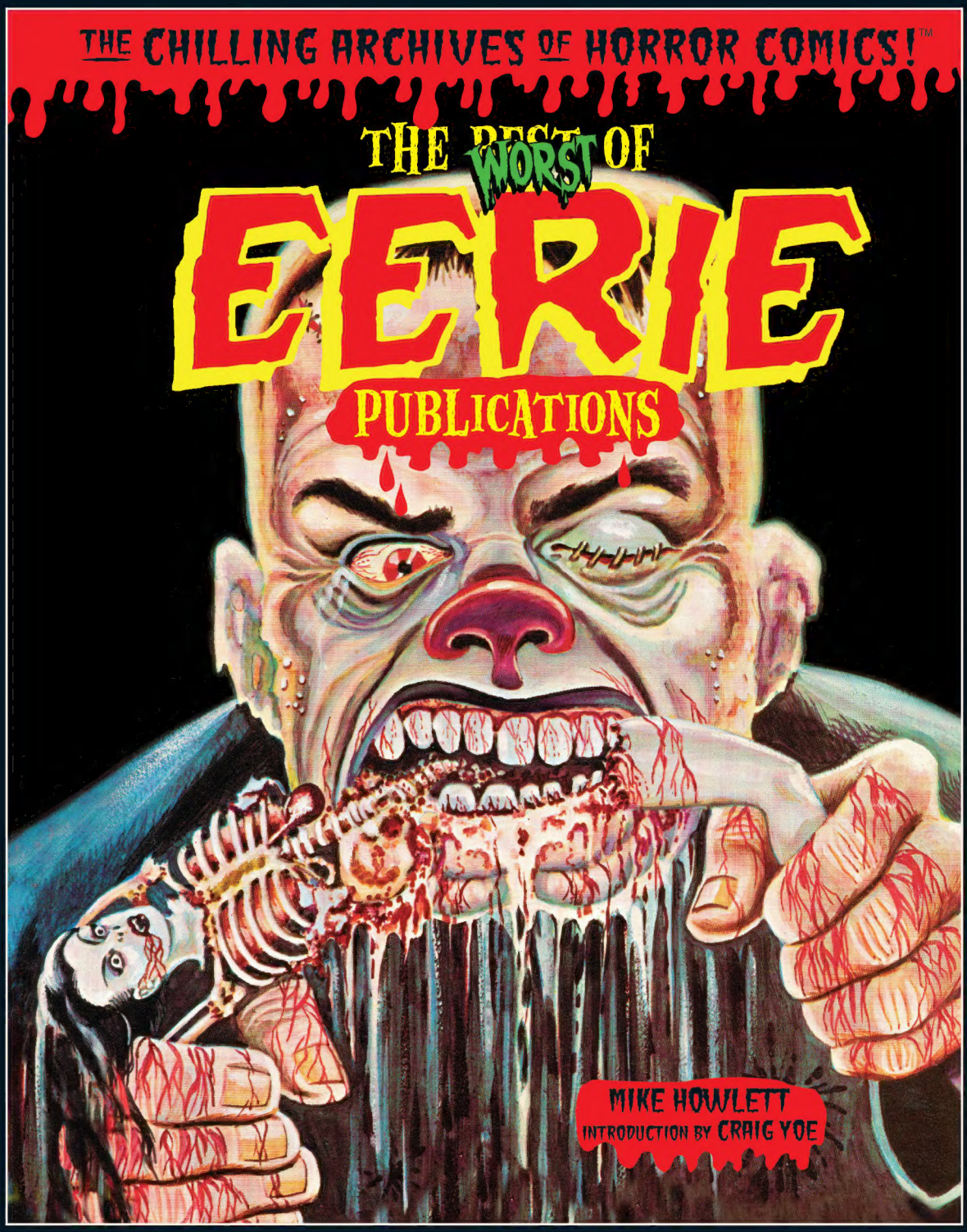

BUT, ACCORDING TO PLAN--JOHN FINDS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE CAR...
NOW WHAT? BLAST IT, ANYWAY! LISTEN TO HER SPUTTER! MUST BE THAT NEW IGNITION COIL! I NEVER DID LIKE THE WAY IT WORKED!
THIS IS FINE! A MILLION MILES FROM NOWHERE AND THE CAR STALLS!


THE CAR GLIDES TO A HALT JUST BEFORE A DESERTED OLD MANSION THAT HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING HAUNTED..
COME ON, IT'S STARTING TO RAIN! WE CAN TAKE COVER IN HERE UNTIL I FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO!
I D-DON'T KNOW! YOU KNOW THE STORIES ABOUT THIS OLD HOUSE! WASN'T THERE A MURDER HERE OR SOMETHING?

SO, CARRYING OUT HIS PLAN TO TEACH SUE A LESSON, JOHN TRENT PUSHES OPEN THE CREAKING DOOR...
YES, I THINK A MURDER WAS COMMITTED HERE! SO WHAT? YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS?
I--I DON'T KNOW! I JUST KNOW THAT I DON'T LIKE IT HERE!
SUDDENLY...
WHOOOOEEEEE!
JOHN! LISTEN! W-WHAT WAS THAT?
HUH! I DON'T KNOW...
AND, AS HE HAD EXPECTED, HIS WIFE LEAPS INTO HIS ARMS, IN FEAR...
HAH-HAH! MORRIS IS DOING A FINE JOB! THAT (CHUCKLE) GROAN SOUNDED JUST LIKE A REAL GHOST MIGHT SOUND!
DON'T WORRY, PROBABLY ONLY THE WIND!
HOW COULD THAT HORRIBLE SOUND BE THE WIND? THERE ISN'T ANY WIND!
JOHN! WHERE ARE YOU GOING! DON'T YOU DARE LEAVE ME ALONE!
I'M GOING UPSTAIRS AND SEE IF IT REALLY IS A GHOST! I'M NOT AFRAID, EVEN IF YOU ARE! BUT I'M CURIOUS!
OHHHHHHHH!
SO THE SCHEME IS WORKING! SUE NOW FORGETS ALL ABOUT GOING HOME TO MOTHER! SHE IS VERY IMPRESSED WITH JOHN'S COURAGE...
DON'T WORRY, SWEETHEART! I WON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU!
JOHN! YOU'RE SO BRAVE! I'M SCARED TO DEATH AND YOU DON'T EVEN SEEM TO MIND THOSE HORRIBLE NOISES!
BUT, AS THEY REACH THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, JOHN GETS A VERY NASTY SHOCK...
L--LOOK! A MAN! HIS LEGS ARE STICKING OUT OF THAT DOOR! HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S D-DEAD!
HUH! Y-YES! HE DOES LOOK DEAD!
GREAT SCOTT! I DIDN'T COUNT ON THIS!
AND THE MAN IS DEAD! WORSE, THE BODY IS THAT OF MORRIS, JOHN'S FRIEND..
EEEEEEEK! JOHN! T-THAT'S MORRIS SLATTERY! B-BUT HOW..
I DON'T KNOW! B-BUT IT SURE ENOUGH IS MORRIS! AND HE'S VERY DEAD!
3


THEN SUE BEGINS TO SUSPECT SOMETHING FISHY...
WHAT'S GOING ON, JOHN TRENT? WHAT WAS MORRIS DOING HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE? WAS THIS SOME KIND OF A JOKE?
Y-YES! B-BUT IT'S NO JOKE NOW! WE'VE GOT TO CALL THE POLICE!
W--WE WANTED TO SCARE YOU, DEAR! TO KEEP YOU FROM LEAVING ME! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I REALLY LOVE YOU! BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS AT ALL! WHO COULD HAVE KILLED HIM!
L-LET'S GET OUT OF THIS HORRIBLE PLACE!
SUDDENLY, FROM BEHIND THEM, THERE IS A TERRIBLE CACKLING LAUGH...
JOHN! LOOK OUT! THAT OLD WOMAN...
HUH! W-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT AXE?
HEH-HEH-HEH! YOU'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH!
I KILLED YOUR FRIEND THERE... AND NOW I'M GOING TO KILL YOU! WITH THIS SAME AXE! JUST THE WAY I KILLED ALL THE OTHERS!
SUE, TERRIFIED OUT OF HER WITS, RUNS FOR THE DOOR...
JOHN! RUN-- RUN! SHE'S INSANE! HURRY!
GO AHEAD! SAVE YOURSELF! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT! I'LL HOLD HER UNTIL YOU GET TO THE CAR, THEN I'LL JOIN YOU!
BUT SUE SLIPS ON ONE OF THE CRUMBLING OLD STAIRS...
EEEEEEEK! F-FALLING! OHHHHHHH!
4

AND GOES CRASHING DOWN, AS A HORRIBLE SCREAM RINGS OUT FROM THE ROOM, ABOVE...
OH, NO, PLEASE-- GAAAAAAA!
AHHHHHH!
THERE IS A SNAPPING SOUND, AS THE WOMAN'S FRAGILE NECK IS BROKEN IN TWO...
OHH--MY HEAD! THE BLOOD--- YAAAAAA!
HEH-HEH--THOUGHT YOU COULD GET AWAY, DID YOU!
AND THEN A TERRIBLE SILENCE DESCENDS ON THE OLD HOUSE! IN THE GORY ROOM ABOVE...
HEE-HEE-- DEAD AS A DOORNAIL! CHOPPED HIM UP JUST LIKE THE OTHERS! NOW I'LL LOOK AROUND FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO KILL! AND PEOPLE ALL (CHUCKLE) THINK I'M CRAZY!
BUT THERE IS A SUDDEN WAIL OF SIRENS IN THE NIGHT, AND OUTSIDE...
HO-HO--THE POLICE AFTER ME AGAIN! THEY ALWAYS KNOW WHERE TO LOOK, CURSE THEM!
CAREFUL NOW, BOYS! YOU KNOW HOW CRAZY SHE IS!
AND...
EASY DOES IT, GRANNY! GIVE ME THAT AXE! THERE'S A NICE OLD LADY!
TAKE YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF ME! I'M NOT GOING BACK TO THAT PLACE!
COME ALONG NOW--YOU KNOW YOU HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE ASYLUM!
LATER, AFTER THE BODIES HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO THE MORGUE-- AND THE OLD WOMAN RETURNED TO THE LUNATIC ASYLUM...
TRY TO FIGURE THAT ONE, HUH? WHAT ON EARTH WERE THOSE PEOPLE DOING IN THAT OLD HOUSE?
WE'LL NEVER KNOW! BUT THE OLD LADY, SHE'S DIFFERENT! SHE MAKES A HABIT OF GOING TO THAT HOUSE! EVERY TIME SHE ESCAPES FROM THE ASYLUM, SHE GOES THERE!
SHE MURDERED HER HUSBAND THERE YEARS AGO, THEN WENT INSANE! NOW SHE THINKS HER HUSBAND IS STILL ALIVE, AND LIVING IN THAT HOUSE! SHE ALWAYS GOES BACK TO KILL HIM! IF OTHER PEOPLE GET IN THE WAY--WELL, YOU KNOW!
The End



The Chilling Archives of Horror Comics
The Worst of Eerie Publications

978-1631401145

Gratuitous gore! Multi-Monster Madness! Bound Beauties! Collected for the first time in a deluxe edition are the comics that deserve it the least: the infamous Eerie Publications' horror comics! Incredibly gory and crazy, the Eerie Pubs pushed the boundaries of good taste with blood-drenched, spine-cracking tales ripped (and redrawn) from the pages of Pre-Code horror comics. And who can forget those nausea-inducing covers? A dirty dozen are reproduced for your discomfort and revulsion!

Featuring illustrated terror by Dick Ayers, Chic Stone, Domingo Mandrafina, the Iger Shop, and many other unsung masters of the morbid, presented in glorious, carefully remastered black and white.

Tyrant Lizard Kings
EMPIRE